MY DEVONSHIRE BOOK

J. HENRY HARRIS

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Sincerely Yours.
J. Henry Harris.

My Devonshire . . . . . Book.

"IN THE LAND OF JUNKET AND CREAM."

ILLUSTRATED.

BY

J. HENRY HARRIS,

Author of "Cornish Saints and Sinners," "The Fishers," "Our Cove," &c., &c.

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SBU

TO THE READER.

I have tried to give you samples of a great county, rich in many things; and of a people, brave, courteous, and hospitable.

Mine are samples only; the stock is large and varied, and, as everyone knows, "in the piece" the goods are better than in the sample. When you close the book I hope to hear you say: "This is Devon, the Land of Junket and Cream, the very place for a holiday!"

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"WHERE I SHOULD GO."

MY DEVONSHIRE BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

"I SHALL spend my holiday in Devon this year."

"I wish I could go with you," said Dr. A——, his dark eyes lighting up. "You may not know it, but I am a Devonian, a 'Devonshire dumpling' of the old sort."

There was no need for confession in words. When I mentioned Devon the whole man confessed—his eyes, his mouth, his voice, all told their tale. Something passed through him so that he could not even sit still. Devon! He rose from his chair and came towards me and gripped my hand.

"Have you settled where you are going? Well, you can't make much of a mistake. Of course, I know where I should go, but all tastes are not alike. I know where the trout and salmon are, and where you may find an otter, and I shouldn't be out of earshot when there was music by the streams.

"Then my boy wants a pony. I've promised him one next half, and where can you get a better pony than on Exmoor? Upon my soul, I wish I could go with you.

"But you can't make any mistake. Go where you please. As soon as you see the red earth get out if you like and walk. You'll be in Devon somewhere, and every mouthful of air you draw will be the wine of life.

"You can get anywhere from Exeter. I know where I should go—out into the wilderness, which would be no wilderness to me but God's choicest garden upon earth.

"Perhaps you'd better get broken in a bit at first, so look at the towns and seaports and ruined castles, and then make for the moors; and when you return tell me if there isn't yet a paradise upon earth.

"Rest? I should think so. Never mind how many hours—nine or ninety. You get into Devon and you must rest. You will be in a new world—all your sensations will be new, all that's in you now that's jaded will be resting whilst new sensations are waking up faculties which you have hardly ever worked.

"Look at me. There's one half of me alive and quivering now which hasn't stirred, I should think, since I cast a fly in 'girt Jan Ridd's' country. Oh, of course, you don't know the Doone Valley. Well, go and see it.

"Object? Of course you won't be any the worse for having an object. I tell you what you can do. Go to Dartmouth, and you'll find much to interest you there. You have only to shut your eyes and go back three centuries and you'll have a clearer reading of history, and a stronger grip of men and things in the golden age of Devon after you've once been at Dartmouth, than you ever had before.

"From Dartmouth? Oh, go where you like. It is really no good making a programme beforehand if you can go away untrammelled. You'll get some sort of an idea of what you want to see and do and have. You won't go wrong. Can't.

"Well, good-bye. So sorry I can't go with you—with you into the dear old land of junket and cream."

So I booked to Dartmouth, and arrived there on a hot day in August.

CHAPTER II.

DARTMOUTH looks what it is: a nursery for seamen. How many ages it has been a nursery no one can say, but Nature made no error when the sea, searching along the coast, found a weak spot in the rocky cliff and went careering up the Valley of the Dart, as far as Totnes. Man—poor historic man—seems never to have been present when Nature did big things like this; and so there is no account of what happened when this grand, land-locked harbour was scooped out.

When the work was done, and the salt sea came smiling up to meet the waters of the river, there could be no doubt that Nature meant this to be a nursery for seamen; and that, at some time or other, a race of men would be born and bred here who would shape the destinies of the country, and lay the foundations of empire beyond the seas.

Dartmouth is a town between two lights—the past and the future. The past shines steadily down from the XII. century and loses itself in the splendour of the XVI., and then it pales and pales, never quite fading, until it reaches us upon the quay where we stand under

"A NURSERY FOR SEAMEN."

the deep shadow of an ancient house. Then, from the hill comes another light, bright and promising, from the Royal College for the training of cadets, who are to carry on the best traditions of the old sea-dogs, fearing nothing so that England is first upon the ocean, and free.

Natives call the town Dart-y-mouth. It is a habit they have, and so make pronunciation easier, and softer to the ear. They say Dart-y-moor, and one gets accustomed to it, and to like it.

When one comes into a strange place it is the little things that attract attention first. A baby talking Chinese will never cease to be a marvel to a Cook's excursionist in Pekin, though the Chinese matron would not even notice anything strange about it. When I landed at Dartmouth the first thing that struck me was the soft and musical accent of the people. A porter asked me a very simple question. His meaning was plain enough, but the actual words were beyond me. I had the sensation of being a stranger at home, and thought it would be just as well to master the dialect—if there was anything to master—before I commenced asking questions and sight-seeing. At the hotel everything was smooth enough.

The natives are not shy. Whenever I approached the water someone wanted me to hire a boat. The one idea of hospitality is to take you on the water—you may row, or sail, or steam; go up, or down, or across in any sort of craft, but all roads lead to the water. Of course, you do not know it at first, but unless you wilfully turn your back to the water you must come, and then you are invited to step on board a boat.

I selected a round-faced man with a double chin to row me about a bit. Then I asked him to tell me something. I didn't care what. He was a cheery soul, and hummed something about the weather and the tides, and Dart-y-mouth in general. His voice was like the musical hum of a drone, rising and falling, now far, now near, inclining one to doze.

The idea stole over me that there was something to learn, and learn quickly, if I were to ramble about, and talk to the natives, and be quite sure what they were telling me. Of course, the native had the advantage; he either knew what I wanted, or divined it. It may be a "gift," but the cabmen and porters and watermen all seemed to know what I was thinking about: and as so many thousands pour into the place now every summer, all dialects are familiar to them. It is not the native who is at fault.

It came upon me after a time that the one trouble is the letter *u*. Master it and you are free of the county—from north to south, from

east to west, you are free of the land. Say "ow be y*u*;" say "m*u*en," say "sp*u*en," as you hear it said a thousand times, and the rest is fairly easy—you soon get over the musical pitch, you like it from the first.

For a Frenchman the *u* is easy. It is his own. He has it in "peu" and "rue," two little words which twist the English tongue out of shape unless it is trained early. It seems a small thing to get over—one English vowel in a good old English county. Only try it, and try it on the spot.

The Dartmouth *u* is not so difficult as in some places—it is a sort of skim milk *u* compared with the rich, thick, clotted-cream *u* of the moors, and further north. In Dartmouth this self-assertive and troublesome little vowel has been, as it were, overlaid and flattened out. As I am writing my experiences, I may as well say all I have to say about the matter in this place, so that others may compare notes after spending a holiday in Devon.

There are towns in which the letter *u* has not much colour and aroma of its own. Plymouth and Torquay, Teignmouth and Dawlish, have watered down the *u*, as it were, until it is very much like other people's. But go to Exeter on a market day, to Crediton, and to Barnstaple and the *u* is alive and strong in b*u*tivul, in d*u*de and g*u*de, in t*u* and y*u*, and a hundred other words for ever on the lips. You hear it so often, when once you know you can't capture it, that you begin to think there are more u's wanted in Devon than in all the rest of Britain. Try to capture it and bring it away, and you find it as elusive as the pixies and the wish hounds. Bring it back with you and air it at the first Devonshire dinner in London, and then you'll know, once and for all, how you have deceived yourself. The *u* is the shibboleth of Devon, and whoever utters it not with the true ring has not been nurtured, on moor and in combe, upon Devon junket and cream.

Dartmouth is not to be denied the gift of "beauty," which is, indeed, the common inheritance of nearly all the towns in Devon. There is, in fact, so much beauty everywhere that one would grow tired of seeing and hearing and reading about it but for the fact that no two towns are much alike. It is really one of the charms of a sojourn here that if you have not got what you want, where you are, you may have it next door. To give an illustration: when your teeth are chattering with the cold upon Dartmouth quay, cross over to Kingswear, and you may throw off your coat—what more could you in three hundred yards?

I thought Dartmouth most attractively beautiful in a soft morning or evening haze, when boatmen and sailors and fishermen

loom largely on the quay, mercifully blotting out creations of to-day, so that the fine old houses, with their timbered fronts and gables, take possession of you, and you live and move with the Gilberts and Drakes, Hawkinses and Frobishers, the Raleighs and all the men who walked these quays and dwelt in these houses, sailed to and fro in this harbour, and laid the foundations of our Colonial Empire.

It is a very small place, and Brixham, quite close, is another small place, and yet these were the workshops wherein the overseas destinies of England were shaped on forges glowing with patriotism by men cradled in storms, whose creed was of three words—God and England!

It is all the better that the place is small and compact, for you can run down the narrow alleys which have been untouched for centuries. Here are the windows that the men looked out of and learnt the news, and the women hung out their clothes to dry, and gossiped about their men who were with Hawkins and Drake, about the expedition to Newfoundland and the fisheries there, and about the doings of the King of Spain, and about massacres and martyrdoms for faith which made the blood boil. It is quite easy to live the realistic life in these alleys, so little is changed; and men and women are living here still whose ancestors sailed with the "Pelicans," and went to Newfoundland, and stayed there.

These alleys are around the church, as the custom of alleys was in the olden days, and the houses of the merchants are further up the harbour, where there was more space, and a better view to be obtained of ships, coming in and out, bearing the merchandise of the world.

Here is the Butterwalk, which served as a covered market-place for the inhabitants, and the houses of old were rich within with tapestry and carving and panelling. Fine specimens of carving and woodwork may be seen even now by the courtesy of the owners, and there is one room the ceiling of which is decorated with a genealogical tree of which the root is Jesse and the topmost branch Jesus. To come upon this "Jesse room" unexpectedly is to receive a check to levity, for are we not in presence of the secret thoughts of the old Puritans of Devon who brought God himself into their business, in peace and in war?

The spirit of the Puritan fathers was a force here and added fearlessness to courage. The spirit of Sir Humphrey Gilbert, half-brother to Raleigh, dwelt here. What that spirit was stands out sharp and well-defined. Sir Humphrey was a Dartmouth man, full of commercial enterprise, and consumed with the idea of extending his country's possessions. He obtained from Queen Elizabeth letters

patent giving him authority to "discover and take possession of any remote heathen and barbarous lands not being actually possessed by any Christian prince or people." He took possession of vast tracts of land adjoining St. John's, Newfoundland. In fact, he knew not how much he took in the Queen's name. He met with disaster, only two vessels were left him, the "Hind," and the "Squirrel" a mere cockle-shell of ten tons. He was urged to make his own passage back on board the "Hind," but he said, "I will not forsake my little company with whom I have passed so many storms and perils." The Captain of the "Hind" has left the following record: "In the afternoon the 'Squirrel' was near cast away, oppressed by the waves, yet at that time recovered; and giving forth signs of joy the general (Gilbert), sitting abaft with a book in his hand, cried out to us in the 'Hind': 'We are as near to heaven by sea as by land.'"

These, the last recorded words of a great soul, have lived in the hearts of Devon men for centuries, and are alive now.

When I got to know my round-faced boatman with the double chin, and to understand him better, I found that he knew about Sir Humphrey Gilbert, of Greenway. I asked him what he thought of his last words "We are as near to heaven by sea as by land." He rested on his oars and looked at me solemnly. Then he startled me by a pronouncement which seemed to have come from the very depths of his being:

"Them words is greater than Nelson's!"

By accident I had touched a hidden chord, and I wondered whether he was the sort of man who, but three centuries ago, forsook father and mother, wife and child and home, at the call of Drake and Raleigh, and the rest.

The men of Dartmouth were a sturdy race—short and thick-set with "good breadth of beam," and as obstinate as Dutchmen, with whom they were in close commercial intercourse, their ships being as often in Dutch harbours as their own.

What a pity that the Devon of the day did not give birth to a few men who could paint as well as fight. One can read much of the history of the Netherlands and Holland in their art galleries. There are a few portraits to be seen—Drake, Raleigh, and Hawkins among them—but one would like to see a big canvas of Dartmouth Quay when the news was brought that the Armada was really on its way. The women of Dartmouth would appear in such a picture, for were they not the daughters of the women who, their men being at sea, beat the French pirates who sailed up their harbour, after having burnt Plymouth?

History read in cold blood now seems cold—we want a canvas glowing with life and movement and the energy of action, such as we see in Dutch paintings of siege and battle and councils of war.

However, we know that there was no thought of half measures on the part of the men who paraded up and down the Butterwalk, under shelter in the storm; or took their short walks "along and across" upon the wharves, when the sun shone, discussing the coming Armada. What might, probably would, happen, if the Spaniard prevailed they guessed well enough, and as they shrank from consequences, their minds were made up, and their hearts were steeled. They meant to win, these men, and to win in such manner that the proud glory of Philip should be laid low. The Armada must be destroyed, that was their fiat; and how they chuckled when they heard that "fire-work arrows" were to wing their way from great "slurr bows" into the sails and rigging of the Spanish ships, and so give them their baptism of fire upon the open sea, and render them helpless, whilst the cannon raked the unwieldly royal hulks fore and aft. This was to be an inquisition for Spain before which the fires of the church would pale. There was no Geneva Convention in those days to prevent the use of "fire-work arrows," no "rights of belligerents," nothing but the right of might, and cunning, and audacity to sink and capture, take and slay, the enemy, whenever and wherever found.

These men on the Butterwalk and on the quays were the men to do it—round, apple-faced men, with thick lower jaws set close, and fists clutched, ready to strike. These "fire-work arrows" were new then in naval warfare, and the ancient ballad tells us they were really used:

> The Queen she went to Tilbury,
> What more could we desire a?
> For her dear sake Sir Francis Drake
> Did set them all on fire a.

There is just enough, but only just enough, of the old town left to enable one to imagine what a quaint and picturesque town it was in its palmy days. There have been rumours in the air that the Butterwalk, the one fine example of street architecture, is to be sacrificed to modern tastes and requirements. The stranger can only sigh, and pass on. It is no business of his, perhaps, and yet he may breathe a silent prayer that rumour in this case is a "lying jade," and ought to be seated in a ducking stool, and dipped and dipped and dipped again, as the men of old time served unruly women in this river Dart.

Dartmouth has been famed from time immemorial for its ships and seamen. Born and reared in such a nursery, whatever appertained

to the sea was for them a law of life. Chaucer has a slap at them for not being too honest. There is an Eastern proverb that "dwellers by the sea are thieves." Certainly, Dartmouth men did their best to gain themselves an evil reputation. They looked upon the world outside their own harbour as their heritage, and gathered their harvests where they could. The old Viking blood in their veins was strong within them.

If they were "corsairs" and "pirates," at all events they understood navigation, and knew geography better than others. They sailed round the world with Drake and plundered with Raleigh. Men who could neither read nor write were living charts, and brought home tales of cities and empires, races and laws, manners and customs which were outside the experience of the rest of the world. Dartmouth became a museum of priceless curios. Nothing surprised them, not even Sir John Gilbert's "parakito," which would "speak anything, if well taught," eat meat at table and drink claret wine, and then "set in a gentlewoman's ruff all the day!" A most gentlemanly and courtier-like Parakito. One might have expected him to shed a feather, and lay it under his mistress's dainty shoes.

CHAPTER III.

ANCIENT Dartmouthians had a business side which their descendants have not known how to improve on. Many people shake their heads now, and say that the people grew stale, just as athletes do who over-train for a season.

It is certain that the old inhabitants trained severely, carrying off the "blue ribbon" in the Elizabethan age, and wearing it for a long time afterwards.

Nothing interested Queen Elizabeth, who had a little Devon blood in her veins, more than to listen to the grand schemes for making money unfolded to her by Hawkins and Drake. There were no love passages between them—not even gossip had aught to say of "tenderness," although the virgin queen conversed with the bold seaman Drake by the hour, out of earshot of her attendants. It was only "business."

There is not, after all, very much difference between then and now in the manner of carrying on "business."

The Queen was concessionaire; Hawkins, Drake, Raleigh, and the rest, were promoters. The Queen approved the prospectus and granted a license, or patent, or concession in consideration of so many "founder's" shares being allotted to her. Then, as an individual, when the syndicate was formed, she put on her "little bit." Only a small number of the public were ever invited to join these undertakings, and those who were invited were generally merchants and ship-owners. The company, so promoted and launched, was called a "venture," and the holders of stock were not shareholders but co-adventurers. The Queen was in the know all the time—in fact, nothing of importance could be done without her, and no expedition sailed unless she had her "little bit" on.

The first expedition Hawkins undertook on the coast of Guinea for "blackbirds" divided sixty per cent. profit, and laid the foundation of our slave trade in the West Indies. The Queen was concessionaire and co-adventurer. The second expedition, after making an estimated profit of £1,800,000, came to grief. The Queen, with commercial instinct well developed, covered her loss.

The beginnings of England's commercial supremacy seem to have been hatched in this part of the world in Devonian skulls. Devonshire men were promoters and directors, acting managers, and all the rest, with the Queen for figure-head, concessionaire, and co-adventurer. The Crown, in those days, encouraged all enterprise which could be worked at a profit; and families, with ready money and sons to send to sea, were always on the look out for a "good thing" in which to invest their capital, and for some expedition which their sons could join, and learn the gentle art of making sixty per cent. upon a voyage!

After the defeat of the Armada, Drake flourished upon the seas which he scoured for prizes. He had a sort of joint-stock company fleet with him—the Queen had two ships in the fleet. The practice was to overhaul every foreign vessel suspected of having anything on board worth capturing. Flemish ships were stopped and robbed sometimes, and a peaceful Portuguese was "suspect," and then condemned if there was anything Spanish on board—a Spanish hen, or a stick of black Spanish liquorice, was quite sufficient. When ships, so seized, were brought into port, the inhabitants made ready for plunder, to the great loss of the co-adventurers' fleet at sea.

THE STORY OF A GREAT PRIZE.

In the month of August, 1592, four years after the defeat of the Spanish Armada, the men of Dartmouth saw a great carrack making

for the harbour accompanied by English ships. It did their hearts good, for they had of late been complaining that times were dull, and trade going to—well, where it seems to be always going. The news spread, and soon there was not a man at work but threw down his tools, and ran down to the quay to hear the news, and see the grand sight.

The capture was reported to be rich in diamonds and rubies and spices from the East, and the report was true, for the unfortunate ship, flying the Portuguese flag, had been boarded on the high seas, and her cargo sampled. It was nothing to the old sea-dogs in quest of prey that we were supposed to be at peace with Portugal at the time, and that the captain of the carrack, Hernando Mendosa, had a permit from the general of Her Majesty's ships to pass with his company to Lisbon.

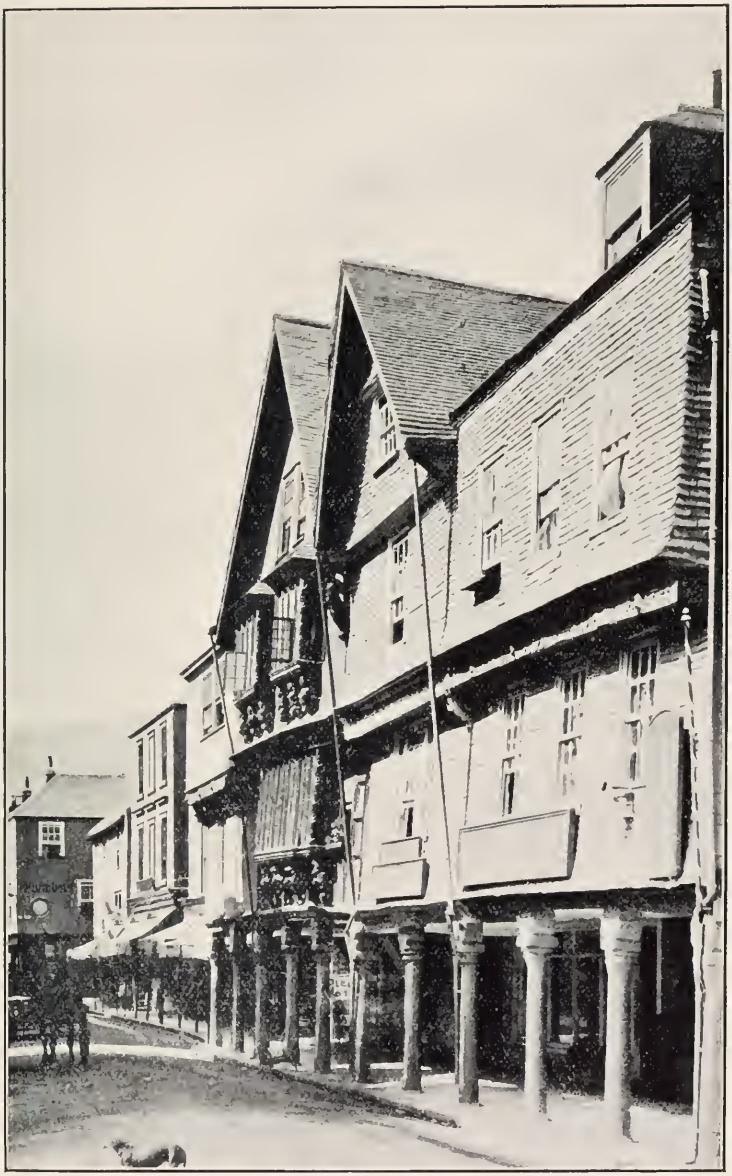
The carrack was a "capture," and every man and woman in Dartmouth intended, God willing, to sample the precious cargo to their own great profit.

The commanders of the ships on the high seas who first boarded the ship commenced the plunder, and Thomas Favell of the "Golden Dragon" had for his share:

A chain of pearls orient,
Two "rest" of gold,
Four pearls of the bigness of peas,
Four forks of crystal, and four spoons of crystal set with gold and stones,
Two cods of musk.

The news was almost too good to be true; but there was the ship brought to an anchor in the harbour, her poor captain wringing his hands and saying that he had been already robbed of one great diamond of the value of 500,000 ducats, and that his cargo was worth five millions, all belonging to the King of Portugal, his master. Then the poor man fell on his knees and prayed his captors to return to him his "compass, maps and astrolaby," and let him proceed on his voyage.

Notice of the capture was sent in all haste to the Queen, who despatched Sir Robert Cecil to take charge of the carrack and her treasures, and suffer no man to pillage; but before he could arrive the men of Dartmouth took possession, and began to sell to the Plymouth goldsmiths and merchants whatever they were minded to buy; and every one who went on board came away full-handed. A sailor man, the master of a little ship, made off with "half a peck of pearls" in a bag, and a good store of "fair rubies and diamonds."



"THE OLD BUTTERWALK."

The carrack was condemned as a "prize," and a commission was appointed to take account, and make sale, and partition amongst the co-adventurers, including the Queen, Drake, Raleigh, and many soldiers, mariners and merchants whose ships made the capture.

There was then no lack of pearls and precious stones, ambergris and spices—treasures of all kinds, and merchandise from the East—hidden away in nooks and corners of the old houses, and sent away by night to friends; and there was great grumbling by the Queen and co-adventurers at the smallness of the consignments sent by Cecil to Greenwich for sale in London.

And the co-adventurer's acquainted Her Majesty, through Sir Robert Cecil and Sir John Fortescue, of their discontent, and resolve in future to carry rich prizes, taken upon the high seas by their ships, to such ports as pleased them, and where they could make the best profit. The men of Dartmouth were too smart!

The great diamond valued at 500,000 ducats was never traced by the commissioners, who went up and down the country, examining people upon oath, when it was too late.

William Bradbent, of Gravesend, who had had dealings, made confession in manner following:

"A mariner meeting me on the Campside of the common-wharf at Gravesend, bid me 'good morrow' and asked me how I did. I said 'Well, God a mercy, my fellow,' which done, I went to the Campside and leaned there.

"The fellow then came to me and asked me if I would deal for certain jewels.

"I straight desired to see them, and so went to my house and did so.

"The things he had I then demanded the price of, and he held for £160 for all, but in conclusion I bought them for £130, which I paid him present.

"There was in small sparks (diamonds) as I do remember 1,330; other there were of a somewhat bigger sort, but how many I cannot justly remember. Also there was 61, or such a number, of small rubies, 16 ounces of ambergris, with two or three necklaces of small pearls, and one chain of gold of eight ounces."

This simple, truthful dealer with stray mariners who gave him "Good morrow," but whom he knew not, then sold the whole lot to one Harman, a Dutchman, and one Sparrow, an Englishman, who could never afterwards be found!

Still the commissioners were active, took depositions and sent them to Cecil, who deposited them at Hatfield House.

So Dartmouth was rich for a season, and the people, who were so minded, thanked God daily that England had enemies on the sea; and that there were Devon men to capture them, and Dartmouth men to share the spoils.

* * * * * * * *

People here say of themselves that they are not so smart as they used to be. Dartmouth once had the monopoly of the Newfoundland trade. Dartmouth men fished the waters and colonised, and yet, somehow, the trade slipped through their fingers. As I have said, the people may have over-trained in the Elizabethan and Jacobean days, and then gone stale.

There are plenty of reasons. I heard many. Much fault was put upon Plymouth, upon shipping, upon railways, upon governments, upon everything and everybody. However, it is their own business. The Royal Naval College is here now; a few modern houses have been run up, and a new town is uprising.

Devonians are a compact, sturdy, useful race. The narrow Tamar only divides them from the Cornish, but they might have been divided by continents and differed less. I have been told, by men who know, that in South America, in Kentucky and Virginia, you may meet men as like Devonians at home as peas in a pod—the same outdoor look about them, the same set of the head, the same straightforward glance of eye that tells of steadfastness and courage. There is independence in every movement, and then there is that easy poise and jaunty fighting set of the head.

I met a man who told me that he could always pick out a Devon man by this set of his head. No man, he said, who had once seen a Devon regiment on the march could mistake them; and on board navy ships the Devon lads had a masterful look about them which had come down as a hereditary possession.

When in unfamiliar places, it is nice to meet a candid stranger of pronounced opinions who will tell you where to look, and what to look for. Whenever I met a ramshackle-looking sort of man, too undecided to turn to the right or the left, I put him down hereafter as no true son of Devon, but some poor specimen of manhood who had lost his way from the shires.

As I have said, the people across the Tamar are altogether different—so different that comparison is useless, but the two races blend magnificently. And there has been a good deal of blending

during the centuries. County families generally own estates in the two counties, and there has ever been a subtle attraction between the dark-eyed, passionate, imaginative Cornish of the Duchy, and the blue-eyed, plump-cheeked blondes all along the southern coast of Devon.

The blend is charming, if for no other reason, because it tones the reserve which is so native to the Devonian that some mistake it for sullenness and pride. A Cornish man will tell you his family history from the days of Adam the first time you give him a chance to talk; but the Devon man moves slower, and wants just a little more of the warmth which the other has in abundance, and to spare. The blend is, however, almost perfection.

CHAPTER IV.

"I WILL see Plymouth!"

You are drawn to Plymouth. You want to see the town, throbbing with life and energy, which has absorbed the trade and commerce of a place like Dartmouth. There is a little trade with Newfoundland left to Dartmouth—not much, but enough to keep old memories alive. There was a "packet" trade, but Plymouth took it; and something else, and Plymouth took that; and then something else, and Plymouth swallowed that up also. The glorious harbour is left, and so is the Dart, and so are the empurpled cliffs bathed with blue water. These remain!

You want to see the place which possesses this magical attraction.

A tug was leaving the harbour at noon. It was an inducement to sail over the course that the Elizabethan heroes sailed over times without number. The coast line was just the same, and, I doubt not, if Drake was at the helm he'd know every beach, and rock, and cliff, until he came to Drake's Island in the Sound. Then he would be lost in amazement, and well he might be.

There are a few ancient landmarks. If Drake were landed in the Barbican he would find his way to the Parish Church. Instinct would take him to the Hoe, and then he would realise what a vast gulf separated him from that great day when a mighty shout announced the sighting of the great Armada.

The ancient capital of the county is Exeter, but this is the Metropolis of the Duchy.

There are those who say the Tamar does not divide the two counties, and that all is Cornwall as far as the Duchy extends, which includes Devonport, Plymouth and Stonehouse, and a nice slice of what is popularly called "Devon," besides. This is one of those nice questions which are debated but never determined; and it is of little consequence, as the Cornish are quite content with the land on their side of the Tamar, and are willing to leave the sister county in possession of the rest.

There is no place from which you can get a good bird's eye view of Plymouth as it is. Ancient parishes and towns are over-run, and it is all Plymouth, the Metropolis of the West, to the stranger. Devonport, the elder sister, is hidden away, and the tourist looks upon it as a sort of appanage to be visited on off days. Then there is Stonehouse, which you pass through without noticing—a sort of conduit for traffic between Plymouth and Devonport. The soul of the Three Towns is Plymouth. If the Three Towns should ever become one, the name which would survive is Plymouth. Even now, unless one wishes to be very particular, he says Plymouth, just as a dweller in Highgate or Brixton says London. We may as well follow the fashion.

Plymouth has the magnetism of great things for small. Most things having life and vigour are drawn within its influence, and elbow their way upwards, or go under. This Metropolis of the West has a call note for the youth of the Duchy which is heard and listened to over and above all the voices of the moor and the music of the streams. Somewhere on kerbstones, and in deep shadows, there is room even for "wasters."

To go to Plymouth is an inspiration; to stay there is to get a start in life—all the roads from the Land's End lead to Plymouth. Thousands come here every year to get a start at something. The Devon roads, for long distances, are equally direct. People migrate from the small towns and moors to put on new manners, get a new speech, and rub off some of the moorland grit. The dear old letter *u* sticks to them like burrs, and so also does the gentle inward breathing which makes the "eeth"—"eeth, yu be lukin' butival!"

A country lass soon puts on airs and graces and makes game.

"Well, John, and how be yu?" inquires Mary Ann, thrusting her head out of window, of a passing country-man.

"I don't naw yu—how did yu naw me? Be yu Betty that used to live to Sticklepath?"

"No, I beant."

"Lor, I thort yu waz now, yu gaped so, jest like 'r."

"THE METROPOLIS OF THE WEST."

"How very perlite yu be, varmer!"

"Eeth sure, we allys be in our peart, and ef yu Plymouth maids want to buy any of the article us have a good stock on hand, and can zill et to ee cheap."

Countrymen carry a little caustic with them when they move about.

For the stranger, life here is always gay, and the people differ greatly from their more serious cousins across the Tamar, who are prone to fits of melancholy, and to dash the joys of life at times with an infusion of bitters, in order to get up an appetite for the life to come. Across the Tamar, the poor flesh has often much to put up with, and is made to feel itself sadly out of place in a world fashioned for enjoyment. In the Three Towns, however, the poor flesh is well looked after, and, as a consequence, shows a fine capacity for happiness.

A most desirable place to live in for those who think it no sin to walk on limestone beautifully veined, and looking like marble when it rains; and no reproach to women to be as fresh as lettuce leaves, with complexions of the wild rose, and yet vain and openly desirous of making themselves attractive in the eyes of men.

The march of soldiers through the streets, the music of regimental bands upon the Hoe and in the park, the naval receptions and balls, the restless movements of men of war in the Hamoaze, the busy hum of Keyham, the *reveilles* in the morning, the booming of cannon at sunset, Royal salutes, and bugle calls prevent stagnation.

And the women can dance—dance like the beings of air and sunshine in the sunny South. The story is told that when Smeaton wanted the well-waxed floor of their Assembly-room in order to set up the model of his lighthouse, the women of the Three Towns worked up their men-folk to refuse permission. Smeaton wrung his hands, and shed bitter tears for a whole season to the Trinity Brethren, who were helpless, because the women preferred their well-waxed floor to lighthouses. After all, it was only a little delay; and the model was set up, and the lighthouse was built, at last; and the Devon belles had their dances.

Plymouth is a modern town with historic heirlooms which may be looked at and made much of on occasion. What one sees first is all modern, and that the spirit of the place is up-to-date and commercial, and every man is free to make a fortune, if he can, and spend it, as he will. There are no social traditions here preventing a man taking off his coat and selling blacking, or soap, or "swapping old iron for pins,"

and then going down to his tomb with all the honours of black plumes and white handkerchiefs. No pride about a Plymouth man, if he can only "get on."

The town fathers have an aristocracy of their own, which is reckoned up in £. s. d. The banks usually hold the patents of nobility, so the commercial spirit is not handicapped by any high-falutin' nonsense about blue blood and old families, as in some county towns which have gone asleep. In the race for position Plymouth is formidable; what is here it absorbs, what is far off it holds in check—it places one finger on Southampton, and keeps it there, and another finger presses gently on Liverpool. The professions live on trade; and army and navy men pass through as birds of passage. For them Plymouth is most agreeable quarters. The county gentry do not interfere, but look on benevolently, and reap the profit when another ten thousand houses are to be built upon their estates.

Through its press Plymouth marks time for the county. The daily papers overshadow the rest, and so represent the spirit of the age.

The antique comes on one like a revelation. The new Guildhall carries on its face the words "Ambition and Enterprise"; you pass it and step into the Plymouth of Drake and Hawkins, and the Pilgrim Fathers. There is not much that is really ancient left, and the way to see it is to wander up and down the thoroughfares leading to the Barbican. The Barbican is classic ground; you can smell it, and then fancy you are a Pilgrim Father!

There is, indeed, character about these old houses with wide gables and timbered fronts, high walls, and deep, gloomy doorways. You feel that they were built for men who took their lives in their own hands when they went abroad in troublous times, and might be required to withstand riot and popular violence, and the too polite attentions of Spanish and French enemies, ready and willing to set fire to and sack the town.

There are distinguishing features to-day when the women decorate their windows with the family garments on outriggers, the secret of making and fixing which seems sacred to old seaport towns. A perpetual carnival should be going on if the waving of garments in the breeze were an indication of rejoicing. In olden days, when these substantial houses, with fine staircases and panelled rooms, were the residences of the merchant adventurers of Plymouth, real flags and banners, and gaudy tapestries were hung out of these self-same

windows, when church bells were ringing and cannons firing at the news that the fleet had come in sight, rich with the spoils of the Indies.

This is old Plymouth—genuine. If Drake were to land on the Barbican to-day he would find his way well enough to St. Andrew's Church and Whimple Street. What a pity there is not more of it!

I suppose there are thousands of people in the Three Towns who have never been on the Barbican, and up and down some of these old streets; or poked their noses through the doorways, and peeped into the courts beyond with the sleepy atmosphere. I made it a point of asking some very genteel people living in suburban villas round about, but what they knew of the Barbican was that fish were landed there now, and that once on a time the Pilgrim Fathers sailed from there in the *Mayflower*. You may put suburban Plymouth through a very severe examination and learn no more than this except, perhaps, that Eastlake, once President of the Royal Academy, was born near the Custom House, and that John Kitto, scholar and traveller, was born in some pokey-hole, and that Haydon, the historical painter, was born in Whimple Street. I think all the school children in the Three Towns should, by way of treats, be personally conducted through what remains of ancient Plymouth. It would do them good, and they would take a lot more interest in their books after each object lesson.

To the stranger I say, "Go to the Barbican," and go there in the early morning when there is just a trifle of sea haze, just enough to shut out all beyond what you wish to see, and yet to make the fishing-smacks and trawlers, with their heavy brown sails and large spars, look bigger than they really are.

If you don't mind being hustled, it is a fine sight to witness the harvest of the sea piled upon the stones in heaps—some panting still, their glowing tints just losing their glittering brilliancy. There is as much difference to the eye between the look of a fish alive and a fish dead as there is to the palate between a fish fresh from the sea and a fish packed in ice.

Here, too, you see Plymouth at work. The men who crowd in these old historic houses live in rooms partitioned off, in garrets, and in cellars, and anywhere so as to be near the landing-place, and you see the sort of stocky, thick-necked, deep-chested, broad-beamed men this part of Plymouth can produce. Here, also, are the fishers from Brixham and Cawsand, in jersey and sea-boots and sou' westers, with a look of command, like the sea-kings they are on board their own craft.

Oh, yes, it is a fine sight, and you must see it for yourselves—the camera won't do it for you, and you can't pull aside the blind in your bedroom window and take it all in by looking out.

On the Barbican, too, are the tablets bearing the legends in connection with the sailing of the Pilgrim Fathers in the *Mayflower*. It is a pious duty to read these—all American visitors do, and some would even like to float the Barbican, legends and all, across the Atlantic.

"We rely on the people of Plymouth to keep the Barbican for us *on trust*," says young America without a smile. There are forty Plymouths in America, and the Barbican and just round about is "Mother."

Many romances in real life have been born in Plymouth. I have heard here that when the walls of old England sailed the seas with acres of white canvas bellowing to the breeze, there was more life and colour in the Navy than there is to-day. I said something to this effect to an old service officer, who had been "a gay dog, by Gad, sir," and he replied :—

"If there was more romance there was a precious sight more weevil in the biscuit. By gad, sir, the service is a luxury now, but the old boys were the finer men; and if you doubt my word, sir, go and ask the women."

On the 16th September, 1788, there were married, in the parish church of Charles, twin sisters, described in the chronicles of the day as "agreeable young ladies with handsome fortunes," to two dashing young lieutenants. The sisters were named respectively Eleanor and Bridget, and Eleanor, who married John Evans, R.N., became the mother of Mary Anne, Viscountess Beaconsfield, who was born at Exeter. Mary Anne Evans was a "mystery," and society weaved romances about her. At the age of twenty-six she made a brilliant marriage to Wyndham Lewis, a man of wealth and fashion, and sometime M.P. for Maidstone. Her real antecedents were concealed, and also her age. Her father was of humble origin—a "bluejacket," who obtained his lieutenant's commission after passing an examination. Her mother was a Viney, of Gloucester, a county family, with a settled estate. There was nothing to conceal but the "bluejacket." The smart set of the day took up the matter and wove a romance to its liking. Mary Anne Evans was "a factory girl with bare feet" when Wyndham Lewis fell in love with and married her! Society was left in the dark.

At the age of fifty-three Mrs. Wyndham Lewis married Mr. Benjamin Disraeli. She dressed "young," and Society was put off

"THE BARBICAN IS CLASSIC GROUND."

the scent. Sir William Fraser wrote that "the question of Mrs. Disraeli's *age* was one of the most interesting circumstances in relation to Mr. Disraeli to one half the human race."

Mrs. Disraeli (née Mary Anne Evans) was created Vicountess Beaconsfield of Beaconsfield in her own right, and died in the eighty-third year of her age. The Peerage and all the books of reference were misleading and hopelessly at sea with regard to her parentage. The register of this parish church of Charles contained the important record of the marriage of Eleanor Viney to John Evans, lieutenant, R.N., and when this was found the rest was easy.

The secret was well kept during the lifetime of Lady Beaconsfield and of the Earl.

CHAPTER V.

SEEN from the sea Plymouth is simply charming; seen from the Hoe the sea is enchanting. The "call" of the sea stirs the blood just here more than at other seaports because it reaches you in calm and storm, and there is nothing to divert attention from the music.

Plymouth is proud of the Hoe, which is more than a mere name for men who were born here: it is a memory and a talisman. Meet a Plymouth man abroad, and say "Hoe!" to him, and see the charm work.

Nelson was made a freeman of this borough, and when he walked along the front with his "good eye" turned seaward, I should have liked to have heard the words which rushed tumultuously to his lips! If there were only an Armada in sight just then that he and his "jolly breeks" could chase around the world, and capture, and sink for the glory of old England! He must have said something, and what he said is lost, more's the pity.

If Nelson could only have met Drake that day and clasped hands, what a meeting between two kindred souls for an artist!

Visitors are always hard to please everywhere, and usually they make observations which are stupid enough. When walking along the Hoe, I had the idea that the place was too crowded and overbuilt now. I should have liked to play a game of bowls on the same green, and have seen precisely what Drake saw when the mighty shout went up,

"The Armada is in sight!" The land, I suppose, became too precious, and there are all these fine houses and clubs here which prevent anything like perfect realisation. A good deal, however, is left, for which let us be thankful; only, if someone could show me, for certain, the patch of green on which Drake played, I should like to lie on my back and rub the bare earth with naked shoulders. Stupid, no doubt, still, I'd like to do it all the same.

Sir Francis Drake is not really a Plymouth man, but Plymouth has taken him to herself and adopted him, which is not, perhaps, unkind, seeing that her great hero took infinite pains and expense to bring a pure supply of water to the town. Sir Francis is really a Tavistock man, but as, at its present rate of growth, Plymouth may reach Tavistock in time, the point will cease to be of consequence. After all is said, this is the place to learn about Drake, and the spirit in which he fought and won sea victories, and the almost adoration of the men who came at last to believe that heaven itself worked miracles in his favour. In the West there was at one time none greater in things relating to the sea, though on land he could no more have his own way than others without disappointment and struggle, especially when he worked for the public. He was most distrusted and badgered and blocked when least selfish!

Until Nelson there was no name like Drake to thrill the hearts of British seamen. The meaning of some things has changed since his day—a "privateer," bearing the Queen's commission, is a "pirate"; a co-adventurer with the Queen, a "corsair"; a man of consecrated purpose, a "bandit." One is almost surprised now to hear that the bold, buccaneering Drake was a profoundly religious man, and that his enemies knew it. "Had he not been a Lutheran there had not been the like man in the world," wrote the Spanish Ambassador concerning him. In his own day, Drake was of the highest type of fighting manhood. He is not responsible for the notions of to-day.

On the Hoe is the statue of a man, robust and commanding, and this is Sir Francis Drake, who was connected with the best blood of Devon. He was cousin to Hawkins, of Plymouth, who was cousin to John Trelawney, of Tavistock, who was cousin to Courtenay, Earl of Devon, who was cousin to the Queen. His godfather was Francis, the first Earl Russell, and he was educated at the expense of his kinsman, Admiral Sir John Hawkins.

His father, Edmund Drake, a zealous Protestant, fled from Devon to avoid religious persecution, and in an epistle to Queen Elizabeth Sir Francis says that his father fled "into Kent, there to inhabit in

the hull of a shippe,* wherein many of his younger sons were born: he had twelve in all, and as it pleased God to give most of them a being upon the water, so the greatest part of them dyed at sea." Edmund Drake was afterwards instituted vicar of Upchurch† by the Warden and Fellows of All Souls. The county of Kent has therefore an interest in Sir Francis Drake—"God divided the honour betwixt two counties that the one might have his birth and the other his education," says Prince.

The gloomy hull of the floating ship in the Medway became a nursery of vengeance—Drake was brought up Puritan, and when the time came to war against the Pope, and Philip, his too ready instrument, the man was ready.

Events shape destiny. He joined Sir John Hawkins in an expedition to the Spanish main. He was a co-adventurer and lost both his ship and money. He barely escaped with his life, and consulted a Chaplain of the Fleet on a point of conscience. Was it right in the sight of God for him to repair his losses at the expense of the King of Spain? It seemed the fashion of the times to put questions of conscience to theological seminaries, and to individual clergymen. In this case the answer was decisive and consoling. He was assured that he had a right to repair his losses on the King of Spain, *whenever and wherever he could.* Prince heard the story and quaintly remarks: "The case was clear in sea divinity; and few are such infidels as not to believe doctrines which make for their profit." The caustic of the remark has lost none of its strength by age.

Drake had a fighting creed and fought to the finish, and was, as we know, one of the makers of Empire. He believed himself inspired, and held a commission superior to the Queen's. Almost in the presence of the Armada he wrote to Elizabeth: "Never was a force so strong as this, but the Lord of Strength is stronger and will defend the truth of His word for His name's sake."

A year before he wrote to Fox: "the right reverend, learned, godly father," describing the operation against Calais, and showing that he believed that the prayers of the righteous won him victories. The following sentences reveal much of the man:—

"Mister Fox, whereas we have had of late such happy successe against the Spanyardes, I do assure myself that you have remembered us in your good prayers, and therefore I have not forgotten

*This was a King's ship moored in the Medway; but Motley says Drake's paternal mansion was an old boat turned bottom upwards on a sandy down!

†The *Encyclopædia Britannica* says "Upnor," and then adds: there is no church at Upnor! The error is obvious—it should read Upchurch.

freely to make you partaker thereof." Then comes the description of the operations against Calais, and he concludes: "But whereas it is most certayne that the King doth not only make speedy preparation in Spayne, but likewise expected a very great fleet from the Straytes, and divers other places that should joyne with his forces to invade England; we purpose to set apart all fear of danger, and by God's furtherance to proceed by all the good means we can devise to prevent their coming; wherefore I shall desire you to continue faithfull in remembrance of us in your prayers that our purpose may take that good effect, as God may be glorified, His church, and Queene and country preserved, and these enemies of the truth utterly vanquished that we may have continuall peace in Israel."

Men who go down to the sea in ships are religious in a sense somewhat different from landsmen. The men of Devon were religious at sea in Elizabeth's time, and the same spirit is in our Navy now. King Edward VII. and Queen Alexandra were present at the laying the foundation stone of the "Britannia" Royal Naval College. The spirit of the prayers of consecration was that of Gilbert, and Hawkins, and Drake.

"Give Thy Holy Spirit unto all who hereafter shall be called to study and to teach within the walls of this College, that they may be visited in Thy faith and fear, and may continually seek to do Thy will and to set forward Thy glory in the service of their sovereign and their country. And we humbly pray Thee that they who, from year to year, shall be sent forth from this College may ever, through Thy goodness, be enabled worthily to maintain the honour of their great calling, and may faithfully, even up to death, by sea or land, defend the cause of their sovereign and his people."

"Bless and protect the forces that serve our King by sea; and grant that his sailors may always and everywhere be found ready to do their duty, for the honour of our only Mediator and Advocate."

"Set her course and brace up the main-yards, and with the Lord at our hellem we shall make port, never fear," said an old pensioner who heard the prayer.

The temper of the times moulded Drake, who now stands colossal on the Hoe, his right hand resting on the globe he was the first to circumnavigate. Time and space in travel have shrunken since then. It took Drake three years to sail around the globe, and now it is possible to make the tour in forty-seven days. Shakespeare dreamt that Ariel threw a girdle round the earth in forty seconds. I am not sure whether that is possible to-day; but even Shakespeare did not dream

that man—mere mortal man—would be able to do the whole distance in forty-seven days, and every prospect of that time being further reduced.

The Plymouth Corporation possess an original portrait of Sir Francis, beneath which are to be found several lines, and amongst them these:—

> Great Drake, whose shippe about the world's wide waste
> In three years did a golden girdle cast;
> Who with fresh streams refresht this town that first,
> Though kist with waters yet did pine with thirst.
> Who both a pilote and a magistrate,
> Steered in his turn the Shippe of Plymouth's State;
> This little table shewes his face, whose worth
> The world's wide table hardly can set forth.

It is a luxury now to cross oceans in floating hotels, but in Drake's days, and in Drake's ships, the proposition to circumnavigate the world for the first time was enough to stagger common humanity. Probably he would never have got a crew together but for the popular belief in his power to perform the impossible. The time did come when it was believed that miracles were wrought in his behalf. The miracle of the fire-ships was sung as a ballad:—

> Francis Drake, on the very same day
> When they told him the fleet like a huge crescent lay
> In the deep, purple water far out of the bay,
> At skittles or bowls was indulging in play
> On fair Plymouth Hoe—so the good people say:
> And he stopped not his game
> For lucre or fame;
> But when it was finished
> Though time was diminished
> He called for some wood
> And there, where he stood
> Crying only "Once more, trust in me"
> Chopped it up in small blocks,
> Then over the rocks
> He threw them far into the sea.
> And each rose from its dip
> A stately, fine ship,
> Mann'd and armed for a blue water trip.
> And *these* were the vessels that certainly scatter'd
> The fleet that at last by the tempest was shatter'd.

A simple, unquestioning confidence in the man by the masses makes the legend intelligible; and what at first looks like an idle tale hatched by sailors on the Barbican, shows the faith of the people in

the man who believed himself to be the chosen agent for the destruction of the enemies of the Queen's Kingdom and His holy religion.

Even chips of wood cast into the sea became ships of war for the confusion of the Spaniards. He was irresistible, and small wonder the people said the invisible supported him by miracles!

This is only a morning dream, under the shadow of the Armada Memorial, crowned by Britannia, with trident and shield in left hand, and sword in right, emblems of sea and war round about; but when one reads the story it seems that very little short of miracle could have saved England that day.

Some of the "ships" which sailed out of the Sound carried only ten rounds of shot. To-day, gazing across the Sound, watching the "Dreadnought," and first-class armoured cruisers steaming peacefully away, it seems but the comedy of war to picture saucy little trawlers and luggers running up, one after another, to the side of some huge, over-loaded, but majestic Spanish ship of war, waiting until she heeled over with the wind, pouring in their rounds of shot, and following them up with a sheaf of arrows, or a volley of musketry, if by chance the powder was dry. Then, with cheer on cheer, running back to shore, to beg or borrow more gunpowder and shot for another venture.

This is the sort of thing to look real in Christmas pantomime upon the stage, and yet it was war—grim and earnest war, of which genuine spoils may yet be seen. The pulpit of St. James's Church, Exeter, came, it is said, from a Spanish ship. The roof of the famous old school at Tiverton was constructed from the timbers of a Spanish wreck. The dining tables of "Spanish chestnut" in Westminster school are said to have been presented by Queen Elizabeth, and to bear the marks of English cannon balls. And then the gentry of Devon added to the richness of their tapestries and furniture from the spoils which floated on the sea, or were cast up upon the beaches after storms. There were treasures in these ships which no one knew; but, tell it not in Gath!—many families in Devon are now living upon fortunes resting upon the plunder of these ships.

Drake eclipsed his master, Hawkins, and stood out in bold relief head and shoulders above the rest—the Nelson of his age. There was a strong dramatic element in him which showed itself unmistakably in his last moments.

"Put my armour upon me," was his last order to Whitelock, his attendant.

He had fought the good fight, never turning his back to the enemy, and died, armour on back and hand on sword—a soldier for God and country! He died on board his ship and was buried at sea.

A Spaniard may call Drake "pirate;" that is excusable, and anything worse from him would be forgiven. An Englishman should not use the word; a Devonian never will.

The Hoe is one of those happy playgrounds of the world where one has been and still will go without getting tired. There is always something fresh. There are the heights, bristling with defences; there is Mount Edgcumbe, beautiful always, in spring-time, in summer, and in autumn. There is Drake's Island with its obsolete guns; the breakwater, and the never-ceasing movement of ships and boats, liners, and cruisers and torpedo boats. Then the sea, changing with every cloud and breeze and tide, restless ever, and marking time for the men of action in counting-house and shop, dock and factory within sound of its breakers.

What a fit setting this for an Allegory of Freedom and Energy born to the musical harmonies of the Sound.

The Duke of Medina Sidonia, grandee of Spain, and Admiral of the Invincible Armada, is said to have marked out Mount Edgcumbe for his own, and I admire his taste. In all Devon, abounding in beautiful estates, not one has been so praised and envied. Queen Victoria summed it up in three simple words, "It is beautiful!" It is also "home."

The grounds are open to the public, and I think much of the charm of the place is the idea of home which has been stamped upon it by generation after generation since the days of the Plantagenets. "This well timbered estate, with deer park, &c., &c.," has never been in the market "to be let for a season" whilst the absentee owners were having good times abroad. Not a bit of it. Every stick of timber on the estate has grown under the eye of an Edgcumbe.

The family is ancient, and has never moved more than a hop, skip, and jump during the centuries. A young Edgcumbe was lucky enough to marry Hilaria, the heiress of Cothele, descended from the Cothele* who *did* come over with William the Conqueror. Then, at the end of two centuries, another lucky Edgcumbe married Joan, another heiress, who had Mount Edgcumbe to her apron-string; and it was their son who commenced building the present mansion and then moved into it. During seven hundred years the Edgcumbes have

*The Cotehele, like the Edgcumbes, are a long-lived and hardy race. The former are well represented as to number to-day. The pedigree is published.

only made *one* move—and only left one paradise in the Valley of the Tamar to enter another at Mount Edgcumbe.

The keynote of life in Plymouth is movement, alertness, expansion. A marine biological station is here already under the shadow of the Citadel; and art galleries, and libraries, and museums on a grand scale, are all to come. No leaving of Plymouth behind in the race!

There is, too, a sweet tolerance in the air for most things, except failure. In religion and politics you go as you please—there is room for all. You whizz along at your own pace on electric trams and motor cars—or on foot if you like—only don't make any mistake and fall. Plymouth won't stand failure and condone it. If a brilliant politician goes into the wrong lobby, off with him!

The atmosphere of Devonport is altogether different. Its normal attitude is official, and its everyday clothes smell of workshops. The bluejacket tripping along is a bit of colour on a sombre background. The town somehow does not understand the art of being gay—sometimes it is noisy, but gaiety, champagne with the head on, it has no notion of.

When the boys feel the stirrings of gaiety within them they jump on a tram and ride into Plymouth; when the girls want to see the shops, and fashions, and life they hop into Plymouth. There are official receptions and balls on occasion at Mount Wise—epaulettes and swords and cocked hats,—a walk through for the women, and home. People say things were different a century ago, when Navy men *would* dance, and the women *would* flirt, until the sun rose and put out the candles.

Dockyardsmen are a class by themselves, and are usually in opposition. They live under the haunting fear that they will die before they are pensioned. This makes them gloomy, and they discuss politics with an injured air when nations are at peace.

Everyone staying at Plymouth goes to Devonport and Keyham. It is a sort of duty visit.

What I like about Plymouth life is its catholicity. There is room for every man there as long as he can stand on his legs.

THE PEDLAR'S STORY.

I made a friend one morning. He sold bootlaces and collar studs and trifles from a tray. He had a white beard, and wore his white hair long. His eyes were fine and clear, and seemed younger than the rest of him.

We struck up an acquaintance, and he told me a story which just shows that there was always plenty of elbow room in Plymouth, even for waifs and cranks.

He was pure Devon, he said, born in a workhouse and "bound" to a passionate cobbler. His master threw the lapstone at him, and missed. Then he threw the hammer, which laid him out. So he cut the bonds with St. Crispin, and skipped.

He reached Plymouth, and got employment at the market—not the present but the old one, outside of which were small dwellings, in one of which dwelt Robert Southcott, who cobbled shoes, and was own cousin to Joanna Southcott, of Exeter, the Prophetess. Robert used the front room for workshop—there was an upper and a lower door leading into the street, so if you wanted to "tell" a bit with him all you had to do was to open the top door and lean over the "hatch." Robert was a very quiet man, and sometimes fell into trances over his work. It was when in one of these trances that my pedlar friend made his acquaintance.

There were four starlings in four cages in the shop, named respectively Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and certain people used to come and go at times, women mostly, and talk to Robert Southcott and the birds, and they belonged to a little society known as The Waiters for Shiloh. Two grey-haired women, sisters, attended all the meetings, and the members of the society called one another "brother" and "sister." They met at night, and read to one another, and discussed the letters of Joanna, the Prophetess. They were all very harmless and made no noise.

When Robert had a trance, or fit, the brethren and sisters assembled and waited in silence until he "returned to earth," for they looked upon him as one "possessed" and sacred.

One night Robert was so filled with Heavenly visions and joys that his heart leaped, and was still.

When the brethren and sisters heard they came quickly, and saw a light upon the dead man's face which was not visible to the parish beadle and the curious.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the starlings, were distributed among the faithful, and the dead man left alone awaiting an inquiry.

During the night the mortal remains of Robert Southcott disappeared.

The brethren stole him away and hid him in a cave, believing that he would wake again—one of the articles of belief being that a

man who had been "sealed" by Joanna, the Prophetess, would not die until after the coming of Shiloh.

It was the two grey-haired sisters who arranged it all with the "watchman" who slept; and it was the "watchman" who told me the story.

It was all waste land where the body of Robert Southcott was hidden, but building is going on rapidly now, and some day the newspapers will come out with the startling announcement of a Mystery on Roborough Down.

My newly made friend showed me some old and faded letters sent out by Joanna Southcott's scribes, which were passed from hand to hand among the faithful. They were picked up in the cobbler's room.

They were no good to him, he said, and he wished me to have them.

* * * * * * * *

One of the letters—the most intelligible among them—was written in the form of a parable on "The Polling of the Trees." I give an extract:—

"My sister paid my brother's debt to free him from prison.

"My brother is a type of the nations; he always swelled too high, and 'polled' the tree too high until he could not come down without help.

"Just see your land. They are cutting off the under branches first; and so they continue, but when they come to the top how ill they come down.

"Now I will tell you what I mean by cutting off the 'under branches,' that is the lower class of the people; as one branch groweth after another just so are the stations of mankind, and the 'under branches' are cut off already by poverty and the sword. Now they are going further, to the second and third class of people, by cutting off their substance.

"How then are the vain men to come down when the tree is pruned through—what branches will they stand on? For as they cut off men's substance so will they cut off their hearts from the tree. Then consider, they stand at the top and see all pruned below them?

"If thou hast wisdom to understand it thy thoughts must go deep."

The "Waiters for Shiloh" have all disappeared now, but mystics of the newest type are plentiful enough.

CHAPTER VI.

"ENGLAND'S my country, but Devon's home" is the hymn without words which seems ever bubbling up in this land of junket and cream. There is an old rhyme, of doubtful origin, which says that when the Conqueror came the Crockers, Carews, and Copplestones were at home. The list might be greatly added to, and what is, perhaps, singular is that they are at home now. No mere birds of passage these gentlemen of Devon of a thousand years ago, but men rooted to the soil, and of such grand vitality that there have always been heirs of the blood to succeed to their honours and estates.

In no county are there, I suppose, so many gentlemen's seats, well-pastured and well-timbered, giving one the pleasant idea of ancestral homes, as in Devon. Some are "stately" and deserve to be styled so; but they are few, and overshadowed by the palatial grandeur of houses in various parts of the country, with which I shall not compare them. The great majority, however, impress one with the air of comfort and sufficiency of income—and, what is more, they look as if they were built for home life, and were lived in, and intended to be the nurseries of generations yet to come.

The custom of the gentlemen of Devon has been to look homewards, and whenever they could escape from public duties they rode with all speed towards the pleasant county, and so, during civil wars and troublous times, the county men were the leaders of the people, and they generally managed to hold their own, or, at all events, to make honourable terms. Ruined castles throughout the land are not many or imposing—picturesque, indeed, and ivy clad, but not "imposing"—and the families who inhabited them are, for the most part, still residing in the county. Touring, one cannot fail to be struck with the large number of gentlemen's residences wherever there are pleasant streams and ornamental timber, but so unobtrusive that you may drive past without seeing them. Some of the loviest spots require searching out.

And this same feeling of "Devon our home" haunts the young and ambitious, and those who are compelled by necessity to migrate. They look back longingly, and those who were born and bred under

the shadow of the territorial mansions know almost as much of the fields and plantations as the owners themselves. Old names and places have a rallying cry for them, and the sanctity of "home." I suppose Plymouth has given its name to more towns than any other town or city in the world. There are seventeen Aberdeens outside Scotland. There are twenty-nine Londons, but forty Plymouths. I selected a dozen likely places to become mother towns, and this is the result, which may be taken as evidence that when a Devonian goes abroad he does not forget.

In London and the colonies Devon men thrill at the bare mention of junket and cream, which may be taken as the symbol of all things luscious and joyous, and worth living for. I have heard people say that junket and cream is a very over-praised dish, and I have never contested the point, for it was always a stranger who made it. A Devonian tastes something outside the dish, and it is that invisible something which is the charm. For myself, I feel cold towards a "haggis," and yet I have seen sons of Caledonia. . . . . But I will say no more.

Junket and cream is a standing dish wherever Devon men meet and talk of "home," and the old places, the old sports, and the men who have made history, and are making it still. At Cape Town the Devon men put on the table

Dawlish turbot,
Apple dumplings,
Junket and cream,
Devon cheese.

This was on the menu, but, most precious of all, in a dainty casket on the table, was a bit of red earth, the mother of all good things Devonian.

Moormen living in bleak and desolate places tell you that they are unhappy in a town where they no longer feel the spring of peat and heather under their tread. They lose the "call" of the moor, and are only happy when they return again to granite tors and wind-swept marsh, and bog, and desolation. Only they love it all, and when they hear the "call" the blood jumps.

The domestic spirit is strong in Devon still, and you scent it as soon as you get away from the bustle and noise of trade and commerce. There is more unrest and the breaking up of humble homes than formerly. Quick and cheap transport has done much, education is doing much, the spirit of the age is doing much, and all things working together induce restlessness and the desire for betterment, and so there is a breaking up of humble homes.

"DEVON OUR HOME."

CONCERNING JUNKET AND CREAM.

"Devon cheer is good cheer," and Devon men were always famous for hospitality and appetite. There is that luxury, clotted cream, which has spread the fame of the county all the wide world over. There ought to be a legend about the origin of clotted cream—the pixies ought to have a hand in it, just as they had in the making of butter before "separators" were invented; and it is wonderful that there is no legend even in Cornwall, where clotted cream is also a speciality.

Some people say that the Cornish is better than the Devon cream, and some say "different." I have eaten it in both counties, and can say, that whilst Devonshire cream is best in Devon, Cornish cream is best in Cornwall. It is said that clotted cream—our clotted cream—was made in Phœnicia, hence the Phœnicians, when they came over and traded for tin, taught the old people the secret. It may be, but I'd rather have a good, homely fairy story beginning "once upon a time" the pixie prince was going to wed the Princess Halfa, who lived on the topmost bough of an apple tree, out of the reach of a witch, who dwelt amongst the roots, and kept watch upon her actions. The princess dared not set foot to ground until she was married; and the witch wanted her to marry her son Brandhu, who lived in a cave, and smelted all the tin which the "nuggies" brought him. The nuggies and the pixies did not speak to one another just then, and the Princess Halfa would have nothing to say to Brandhu.

The wicked old witch winked her wicked old eyes and said the wedding should not come off.

Now it should be known that, when a pixie prince married, his bride was bathed in milk and then annointed with the finest cream. The pixies had the cream all ready, and the old witch blew upon it and turned it sour.

Then the pixies prepared the cream a second time, and the old witch turned it sour again.

They prepared it a third time, and she did it a third time.

"The pixie prince shall never wed the Princess Halfa," said she.

The princess was in the tree waiting, waiting, and knew not what to do. So she sighed, and cried, and wrung her hands.

It was early in the spring, about the time of the opening of the apple blossoms. The princess cried louder and louder, until the pink leaves of a blossom opened, and out stepped her pixie prince, carrying

in a crystal bowl the clotted cream which had been made by fire, and would not turn sour by the old witch's breath.

Then the princess annointed herself, and took the pixie's hand, and they jumped to the ground together, and passed the old witch sitting on the roots of the tree, but without power now, for the cream had been made by fire.

The pixies were all friendly with the people, who loved them and took them into their houses, and there never was any rejoicing unless the pixies were there also; and they taught the maidens how to make cream by fire, which they never would have found out of themselves, for before the cream will rise water must cover the bottom of the pan.

Whoever wants clotted cream must use fire and water, and the secret of making it was the gift of the pixies.

America's learned blacksmith, Elihu Burritt, went into ecstacies over Devonshire cream, and, amongst other things, said that clotted cream (our sort) is common in Syria. The Syrian race is much to be complimented on possessing what Burritt calls "that most delectable of luxuries, Devonshire cream." He also says: "I remember meeting with one old musty volume many years ago, containing a learned disquisition in Latin on the question whether the butter which Abraham placed before the angels was really butter, or this very cream." Surely we shan't be wrong if we vote it cream. In this county cream is always placed before angels in petticoats, and when strawberries are added it is heavenly indeed.

The marriage of cream with junket is, perhaps, one of the most blissful of unions.

I have never heard anyone say a word against clotted cream; but I have heard it is "good for consumption, better indeed than cod liver oil, and a nation sight more tasty."

If you want a cream diet and fresh air go on the moors where there's a good milker or two, and then if you don't get fat and colour there's not much hope.

* * * * * * * *

Many English counties have carried on a quiet and harmless dispute for the title of "the garden," and if it came to votes, the votes of poets and painters and nature lovers, Devon would come into the first rank for favour. In truth, Devon is a garden and a wilderness, and many say the wilderness is the more enchanting, and fills them with harmonies silent within them in the presence of cultivated areas.

It is rank heresy to suggest even to a Devonian that any other county has a chance for first place, and certain it is that the stranger has no chance to grow stale if he but move about. In the matter of wild flowers no county, Yorkshire excepted, it is said, yields so large a catalogue to the careful observer; every bank in spring time is turned into a garden, and the sea coasts contribute to the list. And then the moors! Even an unscientific lover of nature cannot spend many hours in their neighbourhood without noticing their richness and variety.

Let me repeat it here, "Devon cheer is good cheer." One of the great Budds left this behind him.

"Did two pounds of mutton, an ounce of cheese, a glass of ale, a pint of Madeira and a bottle of port ever yet hurt a man at his dinner? or the wings and breast of a fowl, two plates of custard pudding, four glasses of Madeira and four of port ever yet do injury to a woman?"

The Devon Budds were all doctors, and all eminent in their day, and if they did not understand what Devon men and women could do at table, then no man could speak with authority. The dear old doctor liked to see women eat and drink, and did not encourage the idea that they lived on air and monkey nuts. The Devon women did, and do, live the outdoor life—fishing, hunting and coursing, walking and working, according to their spheres of life. There is not much on a farm that women do not know about, and can do, if need be.

Here is a supper provided for Tom Faggus, the little highwayman, and the hero of a hundred ballads and a thousand marvellous tales. Girt Jan Ridd, the hero of "Lorna Doone," is the authority, and a good one, being himself a famous trencherman.

The supper is laid in a farm-house on Exmoor: "A few oysters first, and then dried salmon, and then ham and eggs, done in small curled rashers, and then a few collops of venison toasted, and next to that a little cold roast pig, and a woodcock on toast to finish up with before the Schiedam and hot water."

It provokes one to smack the lips even now to read of such fare. Exmoor mutton does not come on the table; perhaps there was enough without it, or perhaps it was thought too common for so special an occasion; but, in very truth, there is nothing sweeter than small moor mutton fed upon sweet, short moorland herbage. Try the mutton after a ramble on the moor, and then pass verdict.

There is an old-world charm in the villages—most of them wide enough for cattle to be driven through to the fair in the neighbouring

town. Some of the houses are thatched—people call them "stacked," and the principal house has sometimes a porch, and is reminiscent of the eighteenth century. The old carrier's van plods through two or three times a week, and there is no great hurry about anything.

The livings of the country clergy, though not "fat," are very pleasant—pleasant gardens, pleasant glebe lands, well wooded round about, and good fishing handy. A Devon vicarage is a splendid place for a man who wants to do something—write a history, or edit something, or collect ferns, or breed prize pigeons or short wool sheep. Preaching is not of so much consequence unless the vicar cuts up his sermons afterwards into tracts, or works them into novels, or sells them just as they are at per volume. They get some sort of circulation that way, and bring in something. A former Vicar of Winkleigh not only wrote volumes of theology, but actually set up his own types and bound the books himself. The tomb of the reverend gentleman may be seen in the adjoining parish of Lustleigh. This vicar was an ingenious man, and kept divinity before him even in his garden, wherein he planted shrubs in the shape of tablets in church, bearing thereon the Lord's Prayer and ten commandments.* There are traditions of clergymen on the moor regularly turning an honest penny at the blacksmith's forge. For the shoeing of horses and oxen, curing cattle, and drawing teeth with pinchers, one vicar was said to be able to give points to any man in five parishes.

"Paying guests" are now arranged for in many country parsonages.

Many brilliant university men have come down to these pleasant places and been lost to the world. You meet a man in his parish going about his work, and then you look up his record. He was "gold medallist," at the very least, and carried everything before him. Here he is now getting up school fetes, and bazaars for charity flannel, taking around the oiled feather from cottage to cottage to heal disputes amongst neighbours, and doing a thousand little useful things, and good too, but not quite the things for a man of his intellectual stamp. This brilliant scholar came here a decade or so ago: first he rested and then he rusted, and to-day, when we cross his path, we know that the fire has burnt out. A tremendous waste of energy is here, and one is sorry.

The clergy being still first fiddles in parishes where descendants of the old Puritans are to be found, though not yet sufficiently

*At Shaldon an old Service officer planted shrubs in a field representing a Crown flanked with the letters V.R. Seen from the railway, the design was very effective.

educated to take a broad view of things, some of the old feeling of antagonism survives. It is hard for old grievances to die in places where there is so little change and healthy excitement. The "passen" is still spoken of as though his whole aim and object were to do wrong, and go wrong, and be an offence and stumbling-block to all the world. Here is a friendly chat:

"Hav'ee heard the news, Jim?"

"Good or bad?"

"Bad as toothache."

"What is it?"

"Our passen's going to leave."

"I can tell 'ee worse'n that."

"Sure?"

"Eeth."

"What be'n?"

"Another passen's coming."

But there is always the other side, and when night falls there is peace.

CHAPTER VII.

THE man sat opposite and called for a pint of "zider." He took from a bag some bread and bacon, and from his pocket a knife, and when the cider came he drank a good draught by way of clearing his throat. He was a dusty, gritty-looking man, of the better sort of quarrymen, perhaps.

I gave him "good day" when he took his seat, but he seemed not to notice me. I thought he might be deaf. However, he wished to have nothing to do with me, and I respected his wishes.

My silent friend was about fifty to look at, and grizzled. A frill of dark grey whisker framed his face, and his upper lip was long, and stubborn, and shaven. His eyebrows were also grey, thick and bushy, and when he ate he lifted them bodily. A hard, unsympathetic man he seemed—hard as iron.

There was precision about his movements as of a man accustomed to rule. He finished his bread and bacon, drank his cider, closed his knife with a snap, and walked away. I heard a loud, raucous voice say something at the door.

There was an active old man in the garden sitting on his wheelbarrow. I went out and chatted with him, to kill time until the joint was ready, of which I was to have a slice for luncheon. There was no other house of "entertainment" within five or six miles, and I was in luck here—a pig had been killed, and a joint was baking.

The old man had a sunny look upon him and was anxious to talk.

The man who had just gone out, he told me, was Jim Chumley, foreman of the quarry works. He lived in one of the dwellings down along constructed of rude blocks of stone, quite unshaped, but neatly set together, and the joints filled in with turf, which I had passed. Chumley had the luxury of a porch.

Chumley was a hard man, sure enough, but not so hard five years ago, when he was the deacon of a chapel, where people were mostly hard to themselves, and to their own wives and families—hardest of all upon the maidens.

The old man told me that he himself was a "Methody," and that the people over the way were old Calvinists, and there were plenty more of the same sort, though the stock was shrinking now. I fancied nothing could be worse than this grafting of a hard creed upon a people stubborn enough by nature, in all conscience.

Chumley's story was brief, although it took some time in telling. He was a leading man in the little Tabernacle, and carried a stiff upper lip against all sin and weakness of the flesh. He lived with his neighbours in a very small world, and only knew of sin and temptation in ounce packets—anything bigger they would be obliged to get for him on the instalment system. A good-looking girl living here might look at herself in a glass once a week—twice would be sin, and three times ——! The "Methody" maidens had more license, and Chumley sometimes prayed for them.

Mary Chumley was a fine girl who featured her mother in looks, but in temper was almost as hard as her father. When eighteen she grew restive. She would see, she would know, she would not go to chapel one Thursday night. Her father trembled at this revolt and went alone. It was a new experience, and he wanted light. It came, and for once he felt humbled. He had been too strict with Mary, and there should be a kiss of peace that night.

He went home. No Mary. "She's gone to Betsy Barton's, the Methody girl," said his wife.

He waited until midnight, and no Mary.

"Come to bed, Jim, the maid'll be here in the morning, fast enough," said Mrs. Chumley, suddenly opening the kitchen door.

"A WAYSIDE INN."

But Mary came not.

Tom Barton saw her at Plymouth one day and brought home the news.

Jim Chumley bowed his head. He resigned his Chapel appointments. He went to the services, but was a silent man; he prayed for light, but none came. Hours every night he passed alone in the kitchen, his head between his hands, trying to think, but never getting any answer to the question, "What have I, one of the elect, done to deserve this?" One night he asked himself, what joy he had ever got out of life.

It was midnight, and the snow falling. He brought some candles and laid them on the table.

"For every joy that I have had in life I will light a candle," said he.

"Was it a joy to be born? Well, I will call that *one*.

"Was it joy to sin in youth? Call that *two*.

"Was it a joy to love my woman? *Three*.

"And to wed? *Four*.

"Was it a joy to hear my little maid say 'father,' and to feel her little hands——. *Five*."

There were five candles burning on the table now, and he could think of nothing more in fifty years of life on Vitivur Moor which had happened to him worthy of the name of joy, nothing except the one grand moment when he "felt his election sure." That was spiritual, but in his misery had disappeared. He was sure of nothing now but that in fifty years he had experienced but five joys.

Now he put out his hand and slowly extinguished the lights, one by one, saying,

No. 1. "Let the day perish wherein I was born."

No. 2. "The wages of sin is death."

No. 3. "The love of woman worketh to destruction."

No. 4. "It is only better to wed than burn."

No. 5. "Blessed are the fatherless."

The light of his soul had gone out already, and he sat in total darkness.

"He don't even go to meeting now," said the old man on the wheelbarrow, "and is always like you see him to-day, silent and hard as nails."

"And Mary?" I asked.

"Oh, they never come back when they go away like that."

"And if he were to meet her?"

"He would kill her. I believe he lives now only for that one joy."

We may be much nearer to tragedy than we guess when sitting in a wayside inn.

Village inns are pretty much of the same type all through the county—rough and ready, with but little comfort or entertainment for strangers. On the main road things are better now than formerly, and are bettering yearly—cyclists and motorists are doing something to revive the reputation of country inns. The old folks speak lovingly of the coaching days. Much brightness went out of their lives when the coach disappeared.

A rough table and benches, perhaps a settle by the fireplace; this is the interior; and here the labourers come after their work is done to have a pint of cider, or a mug of beer. The men who come in have an earth smell and an earth look about them—red earth if you are in the south, or it may be brown earth or peat if you are on the moors; or it may be they carry about with them the fine dust of the quarries. I suppose some men could almost tell where a man comes from by the colour of the earth or clay upon his coarse clothes. The men lift the latch and walk over the threshold with a slow, heavy step. However they vary otherwise, they are generally alike in their tread, these sturdy men who work on the soil. If you understand what they are talking about—about horses and cattle, ploughing and sowing, and crops, and all that appertains to outdoor life upon a farm, you will find that the people bring out the true genius of the language—directness and force. They only appear to wobble when they get upon politics and things which they read of in the papers, and frankly "dang their buttons" if they understand a word about.

First they talk of the land, then of catching something, or hunting something, and then about "sojering." Devon men are always very keen about wars, and rumours of wars, and soldiering, and if there is one man on earth whom they love and admire, and would fight "down to ground" for, it is a Devonshire soldier who, in their opinion, has been slighted.

The national drink is cider. The verse of a time-honoured song, sung at fair and revel, runs:—

"I likes zider and zider likes me,
I'll drink zider as long as I can zee.
I likes zider and zider likes I,
An' I'll drink zider till I do die."

The Dartmouth men fought at sea upon beer—not the Queen's beer, which was atrocious, but Devon brewed beer. Sir John Gilbert's

ship "Gabriel" took on board *one* hogshead of beef and *ten* hogsheads of beer, and went out to face the Armada. But the taste for cider is inherited. There are two kinds, the "rough" and the "matched." The Devon man takes the "rough," and smacks his lips over it, as though drinking the pure juice of the apples of Eden. A true son of the soil turns up his nose at the "matched" cider which strangers find so palatable, and there is a legend that it was the devil himself who taught the monks of Tavistock Abbey the secret of making cider sweet by means of burning brimstone, hence the name "matched." There is another drink known as "white ale" because of its milky colour. White-ale is, I fancy, peculiar to Devon, and is to be found on tap in out of the way places and villages in some of the most delightful regions. There is something uncanny about white-ale when first seen and tasted, and the "rough" cider man must be very thirsty before he'll drink it, for he shares the opinion of the right reverend Bishop who declared that—

> "Three spirits condemned to eternal distress
> Compounded, 'tis said, this most horrible mess."

There is a legend that Ashburton was at one time famous for a beer known as Ashburton "pop." Tradition in this case is true, because the matter is referred to in a letter to the Earl of Dartmouth published by the Historical MSS. Commission. It was probably some concoction intended to rival white-ale, the secret of making which has been kept in one family.

The late William Pengelly has preserved some anecdotes. In his geological rambles he was often "far from the madding crowd," wet, tired, and hungry. On one occasion, soon after mid-day, he found himself at a lonely wayside inn, and encountered a forlorn-looking hostess with a black eye. He asked for a crust of bread and cheese and a glass of beer.

"Can't have it, zur."

"Why not?"

"'Cause me and my old man 'th valled out."

"I am sorry for that, but what has that to do with my having refreshment?"

"I tell 'ee we've valled out, and he'th carried away th' kay, so you can't 'ave it. You may have some of they there 'orts—wortleberries—if you like, but there's nort else."

On another occasion Pengelly took up his abode at an out of the world village near Ivybridge, and this is his record:—

"On presenting myself at the door I found a butcher engaged in dressing the carcase of a pig which he had just killed, and said piggie was hanging in the doorway.

"'Yes, you can have a bed,' said the man, 'so please to walk in and take a seat in the kitchen. I would ax you to go into the parlour, but my missis is there cleaning part of the pig, and you mightn't like the smell o't.'"

Bread and ham rashers and butter made their appearance, but the butter was so small a piece that the great geologist looked at it curiously. The dear old creature who waited at table took the hint.

"Don't be afraid of the butter, cos there's plenty more in the ouze; but 'tis allays best to finish up the bits and scraps," said she, showing the frugal side which is almost everywhere met with, though not always so plainly confessed.

The signs of some of the wayside inns are quaint and original, and go to the root of the matter. At Merripit you were told:

John Roberts lives here,
Sells brandy and beer
Your spirits to cheer.
And should you want meat,
To make up the treat,
There be rabbits to eat.

CHAPTER VIII.

SAINTS are not so plentiful in Devon as in Cornwall. Of course, there are "saints," but they are different, and, somehow, not so primitive. The good Danes and Saxons, dwellers this side of the Tamar, were, perhaps, not quite ready for them, showing them scant welcome, and asking them please to "move on" when they sat down by the side of holy wells; also they did not often commemorate their visits by naming villages and towns after them. The number of parishes in Devon bearing the prefix "Saint" is small. Many of the Cornish saints roamed far afield, and some say that they skipped into Wales, avoiding Devon, and then scattered. Some of the old Cornish saints left very beautiful memories behind them. There was St. Neot, who preached to the fishes, just as St. Francis did to the birds some centuries afterwards. The legends of St. Neot are delightful, but there were some saints of a different type, like St. Just, who ran off

with St. Keverne's spoons after being entertained with a friendly cup of tea, or something which required a spoon to stir up the sugar. St. Keverne was very angry, of course, at losing his spoons, and pelted the runaway with stones and rocks and anything convenient, with such unerring aim that St. Just cried *peccavi!* and restored them. St. Keverne's rocks are still to be seen, so there's no getting away from a legend which shows up the very human side of some early "saints."

Across the Tamar "Old Artful" interfered a lot with the saints, but in Devon he was pretty quiet, and not so meddlesome about the building of churches and things ecclesiastical. Tradition has it that he removed, stone by stone, a church to the summit of a tor too steep for ordinary legs to climb. The church is still there. Taken as a whole, the traditions are different from those in Cornwall, for here Old Artful is made to teach good morals to ambitious priests, and monks, and rich men with peppery tempers who oppressed the poor. No date is given, but it is said that Old Artful died of the cold either at North Lew or Chagford. No stone marks the spot.

"Chagyvurd; good Lord! Where the devil died of the cold," is a popular saying. Some people say "North Lew," so you take your choice.

Of all Devonshire towns Tavistock is the richest in legend of saints and sinners. On the one side is the moor, and on the other the Valley of the Tamar, and the town itself has a record of monastic life reaching back into Saxon times. Tradition carries us a long way back, and is no doubt misleading. It says that Tavistock was a "busy town" when London was a "vuzzy down," and so, almost in the same words, Tavistock scores over Plympton, which, in turn, scores over Plymouth. However, Tavistock Abbey is old. A noble Saxon earl founded it before the Norman came, and the Abbots of Tavistock were lords temporal and spiritual over the land for centuries. On the manor of Hurdwick they had the power of life and death, and the Abbey was known far and wide for its kitchens and refectory, schools and chapels, and "still" room. It was a splendid establishment. The Tavy was full of fish, the woods of deer and game and all good things. Tavistock stood well with the powers that were, and became a "mitred abbey," and was "mitred" when it fell. The few ruins tell of past grandeur.

The second printing press in the kingdom was set up here. The first was at Westminster, the second at Tavistock. There is no mistake about this—three books printed here may be seen in Exeter College Library, Oxford. The first book relating to the stannary laws

bears date the second year of the reign of King Henry VIII.; the second was printed in the twenty-sixth year of the same reign. The third has the following: "Emprented in the exempt Monastery of Tavestoke, in Denshyre, by me Dan Thomas Rychard, monke of the sayde Monastery. Anno D. MDXXV. Deo Gracias." There is another fact—Tavistock was a great place for schools. It is now, but it was "back along" when education was a very different affair. The only school for Saxon literature in England before the Reformation was here. It was also a place of mercy, for it had its leper house.

Tavistock gives the idea of belonging to someone. At first it belonged to the Abbots, and then it passed into the possession of the Ducal house of Bedford, who still own it; and so we have the reason for what is old being so well preserved, and for what is modern being so well regulated, and trimmed, and ordered. You are a stranger, and you feel yourself a guest. Your lordly host is everywhere—in the public buildings, in the streets, the schools, institutions, antiquities—it is Bedford everywhere. Only the river has its own voice, a loud and brawling voice, as it leaps over the weir.

Tavistock is on the Tavy, as Plymouth is on the Plym, Exeter on the Exe, and Dartmouth on the Dart. It was the rivers of Devon which, in the old days, shaped the destinies of the people; and, according to legends, every river had its own "voice" and sang its own song, and probably had its own personality also in the shape of some divinity in grot, or cave, or woodland. The Dart demands its annual sacrifice and, unhappily, gets it. Once get away from bricks and mortar and old Devon is old Devon still. There are ghosts in the houses, wraiths upon the hills, dryads in the woods, water-spirits in the rivers, and pixies in the moors. They may not be so abundant now, but there they are!

Tavistock existed long before Christianity took shape in the land. It is situated just in one of those spots that man, as soon as he got over his cave-dwelling habits, would seek for a settlement. A deep valley, rich in pasture, well watered and well wooded, what more could man want after crawling out of caves? The first rude habitations are not on view now. In course of time a town grew up and was called Tavystock, after the river, which has also its Mary and Peter—Mary Tavy and Peter Tavy. When the parish church was built it was dedicated to a saint—Saint Eustachius, as the Abbey before it had been dedicated to Saint Rumon. Had it been in Cornwall, St. Rumon would have given his name to the town, displacing the Tavy with all its associations with heathen lore and legend, but

the Devonians were not apparently very eager, and when they "turned over a new leaf" they liked to turn over the old ones as well and look back. The people were Saxon and had their Saxon runes, and gods, and sacrifices: they had seen King Arthur and his host broken and driven back, and had joined in the pursuit, so why change? The monks lived amongst a stiff-necked people and had their troubles.

They had trouble with the pixies—elusive, ubiquitous pixies—for the people would stand in fairy rings on moonlight nights and say incantations to fairies; they would wear fairy charms; they would bring offerings to running streams and holy wells, and hang the bushes round about with beads, and bracelets, and coloured rags. Even if, and when, they came to church, there was a warm corner in their hearts for old customs and symbols, which the monks denounced.

The monks gave the pixies a bad name, and the pixies harassed the monks. Do what they would the cream would not "turn" into butter, for the pixies stirred it the wrong way for them, and they charmed the trout in the streams and made them invisible to mortal eyes, and when they caught the monks abroad they "pixie-led" them, and got them into sore trouble and disgrace, especially the younger men, well-favoured and fat, and looked upon kindly by the women folk.

The monks of Tavistock kept a good kitchen, and their "still room" was famous for a liqueur distilled from heather. The process was a secret. Only two men were allowed to know it at one time. When one died, the survivor taught another, and so the secret was kept secure from generation to generation. Even the Abbots did not know, but were allowed to taste freely, and at all times. It was a privilege, and so highly thought of that an Abbot always waxed fat, until it became a saying: "As fat as an Abbot of Tavistock," wherein they differed from the neighbouring Abbots of Buckland, who were as thin as men who kept a perpetual Lent.

Abbot John of Tavistock let it be known that he was at war with the pixies, and he made a vow to drink no heather wine until he'd driven them out from all parishes within his jurisdiction.

The good father was served with water, but the pixies changed it; and when he passed the "still-room" door, the pixies led him inside, and played him such tricks that he got into trouble, and was talked of far and wide. And the pixies would not let the Abbot sleep—no, not even after a big draught of the heather wine, drunk in all innocence, not knowing it to be wine, and that he had broken his vow—for when he

nodded in his chair, then the pixies tickled his ears and nose so that he was irritated and lost temper, and cursed both in Latin and the vulgar tongue.

The brethren who heard wondered greatly, and whispered among themselves that the good father had lost his wits and was "possessed."

And this went on until one day a pilgrim from the Holy Land came to the Abbey, who had learned many things in Syria and the desert. To him the Abbot told his tale.

"It is the Evil One, and he must be excommunicated," said the pilgrim, promptly.

Then there was High Mass in the Chapel, and all the brethren went in procession through every building and outhouse, and marched around the boundaries of the Abbey lands, chanting and sprinkling, and the pixies they cursed with bell, candle, and book, and did it so thoroughly that, from that day, the Abbot was troubled no more. The news spread that the pixies had been driven from the Abbey lands. A pixie-cross was set up, and although the Abbey is in ruins now, and the lands sold and built on, not a pixie dare come near by day or by night. If a man by any chance is "pixie-led" upon the moors, the glamour falls from his eyes and the spell is broken when he comes on ancient abbey lands, or runs into the parish churchyard; and every man may tell his own story as it best pleases him.

Everything considered, the town of Tavistock has been of very slow growth. A first-class liner would take the whole population to America, and yet the town seems always to have been prosperous, and to have given birth to men of energy and ambition. A stranger leaning against the parapet of the ancient ivy-covered bridge sees a little more, but only a little more, than the "gossips" of other days. The bridge is the great attraction, and some people say that the tumultuous, whirling, brawling river as it passes has played its share in moulding the character of the people who aforetime passed their time in hanging over it, and listening to its music.

Tavistock men certainly came from a fighting stock, and were not particular about the cause or place of quarrel as long as there was a little fighting, and a little profit. The Russells and the Drakes took the lead in the time of Edward III. when they went over to Ashburton, broke a few heads, and were committed to gaol. Then the Assize records show that John Drake (Walter's son) and John Drake, his cousin, one of the Russells, a Dumarle, and other youths of mettle went to Bodleigh, and were brought before the justices for assaults;

"THE BRIDGE IS THE GREAT ATTRACTION."

and that in the next generation Walter Drake raided cattle, and was brought before the judges of assize.

There is on record one very serious affair which shows the temper of the times, and what man would do to wipe out an insult, or avenge slighted honour. The quarrel commenced over the love affair of a gentleman of Cornwall and a gentleman of Devon. The lady fair, being at the time at Powderham, under the wing of the Courtenays, whose relation she afterwards became by marriage, the Darneys, Drakes, and Courtenays, and all who would follow them, marched to Looe, and so belaboured the partisans of the other side that men were slain, and two of the Drakes were executed, after trial. A good fighting stock there was around Tavistock in pre-Reformation days; and when the men turned Puritan, and suffered wrong, they were to be depended on to fight to the finish, as they did.

Tavistock men are very proud of Drake, a colossal statue of whom by Boehm stands at Fitz-ford. His birth-place (so long a matter of dispute) is now known. "He was born at Crowndale Farm, now in the possession of the Duke of Bedford. The original lease from the monks to Simon Drake, and renewals down to the days of John, grandfather of Sir Francis, are in my possession."* Pilgrims, who are so minded, may now pay their devotions in the right place.

Sir Francis Drake built a house for himself at Buckland on part of the ruins of an ancient abbey church, "the four large arches of the central tower of which remain in a garret under the roof." There is now under this roof, silently falling into decay, the old drum which went round the world in the "Golden Hind," and then summoned every man on board the "Revenge" to his duty when she sailed out to meet the great Armada. There is something pathetic in the sight of this old drum, whose voice was so full and clear and made men's hearts throb, now falling into dust.

And there is a strange superstition here in Devon about this drum which makes its very dust precious. I have called it "superstition," but it is also prophecy and allegory. It is said that if England is ever in peril of invasion, one tap on this old drum will recall from the deep the spirit of Drake, who will once more lead his countrymen to victory!

Who can doubt this allegory?

The old drum sounded, and Drake was reincarnated in Blake.

Then again the old drum sounded, and the spirit was reincarnated in Nelson.

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* Lady Elliot-Drake to the Author.

And when it sounds again, loud enough to be heard above all the passions and strife of party politics, who can doubt that the old spirit will re-clothe itself once more, and once more lead the men of England to deathless victory? And the men of Devon will be on every ship that floats, and fight after the manner of the men of old.

Who can doubt the allegory—that the tap of this old, mouldering drum in the hour of national danger will awaken into life the heroic spirit of the XVI. century?

Many Drake relics are religiously preserved here and at Nutwell Court. There are the Bible which sailed with him around the world, the green silk scarf, exquisitely embroidered, and bearing in gold letters the motto "The Almighty be your Guide and Protector to the End." There is his sea cap and his seal, a jewel presented by Elizabeth, and a portrait of himself in miniature; also the portrait of Don Pedro de Valdez, his prisoner from the Armada, who lived at Buckland until his ransom arrived from Spain. At Nutwell Court, facing Powderham, but on the other side of the Exe, are other precious historical relics under the jealous guardianship of Lady Elliot-Drake. Here, in the library, hung on a recent occasion the colours which waved from the "Golden Hind" on his voyage around the world, and these colours waved on board the old ship when Elizabeth dined on board at Deptford, and bade Drake rise from his knees, a Knight; and there are stained glass windows in the Hall representing historical scenes in which the great Admiral took part to the honour and glory of England.

The stories of old Tavistock run to legend, and are usually founded on violence and wrong. The old monks, for instance, obtained the rich lands of Plymstock by fraud and cunning. There is the ivy-covered ruin called Betsey Gimball's tower, which has no legend attached to it other than the betrayal of a nun and her murder by her lover. Then, at midnight—every midnight, fair weather or foul—Lady Howard comes out of the gate of Fitz-ford House, takes her seat in a carriage of bones, and drives to Okehampton.

If repetition can make a story true, this *is* true. It has been told and sung to every tune that will suit a ballad for centuries. It has been handed down as an article of belief by people who have seen the ghostly lady enter her carriage of bones, drawn by skeleton horses, driven by a skeleton coachman, and preceded by a coal-black hound with eyes of flashing fire. Generations of good and brave Tavistock men have shuddered at the thought of passing Fitz-ford Gateway at midnight for fear of meeting the coal-black hound and carriage of

bones and the ghostly lady. Isn't there some Society to take the matter up?

Lady Howard is condemned by the legend to perform a penance which will last until the end of time, unless Okehampton moor should be built over. She is accused (poor soul) of having slain four husbands, whose bones now form her carriage. The coal-black hound must bring back from Okehampton moor every night one blade of grass, and no more, until the moor itself is stripped of herbage—an endless task like that of Sisyphus, and the baling out of Dozmary Pool by Tregeagle with a limpet shell having a hole in its bottom. Her ladyship invites all and every person whom she meets to "step in with me to ride."

Tavistock men are bold enough for most things, but the man has yet to be born who will willingly step into the coach of bones and ride to Okehampton, preceded by a coal-black hound with eyes of fire. Everyone to his taste; most of us would prefer to walk.

Legend has been very unkind to Lady Mary, a woman still of extraordinary beauty and the richest match in the West when she married Sir Richard Grenville, her fourth husband, whom she outlived. She was a woman of "superior wit" and of haughty, imperious temper. No favourite with the people in life, they took their revenge by inventing the "Coach of Bones" story, which the ballad-mongers got hold of and sang through every village and at every fair in the Western Counties. Poor Lady Mary! This is the way in which reputation was made or marred, before newspapers took up the running.

Fitz-ford Gate was the place where people settled their little differences in true Devonshire fashion, and the best man won. It was here that Sir John Fritz (the Hotspur of the time) slew his neighbour, Mr. Slanning of Bickley. The quarrel arose out of some petty personal taunt, and could have been settled amicably, had not Sir John's second cried out, "What child's play; come to fight and now put up your sword!" Then swords flashed again, and Slanning, losing his balance through the hitching of his spur, received a lethal thrust. To tell a man that you will "settle accounts" at Fitz-ford Gate is quite enough.

But Tavistock is by no means a ghostly town. Old memories and prejudices crystallised have taken this form for survival, that is all.

Sometimes this is called the "Gothic town of the West" on account of the new buildings affecting the Gothic. The stranger will not be here long before learning the close relation there is between

this old corner in Devon to the Russell Square, and Bedford Square, and Tavistock Street, and Covent Garden with which he is familiar. One word more. The Public Library is in an old building, verdure clad, which makes a man of cities die with envy to sit in; and on the beautiful old bridge there is always someone to gossip with. "If there is a breath of air anywhere it is here," says a native, who comes daily to open his mouth, and fill his lungs, and watch the ceaseless play and swirl of the river, and the leaping fish in the pool beyond the weir. We may fancy the martryed soul of Lord William Russell haunting the place still, with that of William Browne, the poet, singing his "Britannia's Pastorals" through "Shepherd's Pipes." And I doubt not many another leans over the old ivied parapet to-day and feels that he would like to sing, if only he had the words.

The old love for learning is here still; and if anyone doubts, there is the Kelly College and the New Grammar School to inspect.

Tavistock men have a history and a future.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MOOR to Devon is what the sea is to Cornwall. You can hardly fancy a Cornwall without the sea, and a Devon without the moor would be a country without inspiration. In the Duchy you are seldom at any time so far from blue water that you cannot hear the roar of the waves and feel the sea salt on your lips. All paths lead to the sea. In Devon it is the moor which is ever present. Sometimes the moor runs down to a town, as it does at Tavistock, so you step out, as it were, from your back garden on to the heather. Sometimes you have to walk a little way to meet it rolling onwards to meet you, as at Exeter, or Plymouth. You may be in a town which is on the moor, like Moreton and Okehampton. It is the moor which preserves the race alive—the real Devon stock—and pours its best blood into the towns as wanted to fill up the gaps. Those who live on the sea and by it turn to it, but they are not so many, when you come to think of it, outside of towns which cater for season visitors. The great bulk of the people turn towards the moor.

There is no end of choice of little towns and villages, hamlets and farm-houses where you can put up and have sweet moor mutton, and junket and cream, and drink cider every day; where there are streams,

clear and cold, in which you can dip and splash, and wherein you can angle with the certainty of catching something: you may wander, wander on unenclosed land until you come to the secret dwelling-places of wild fowl and others, and rare kingfishers pass you as flashes of blue light.

I stayed at a farm-house, and the great white gate opened on to the highway—the turnpike road of former days; and standing at the gate one could see and hear a good deal of country life. There was the tramp who went by—the professional gentleman who did nothing, and was taking his summer outing in the pleasantest parts of Devon. I knew him at once with his "S'elp me, Guv'n'r, and I haven't tasted ——." You let him pass on, gladly.

Then an old man comes along whose work is almost done, and gives you a cheerful "Gude marnin'." He's nothing loth to talk over the gate where we are under the shadow of a well-branched tree.

Thirteen children called him father, and not one penny from the parish. One boy was a policeman, and six were gamekeepers on the land—of the girls, four went into gentlemen's service and married village tradesmen. Not a waster amongst the whole thirteen.

Did he remember? Of course he remembered when on this very farm the corn was cut with a hook, and then with a scythe, and when the people of the village used to give the farmer one day's labour to help him to get in his harvest. And the farmer gave them all a harvest supper. Of course he remembered, for didn't he cry "A knack! a knack!" and sing "Widdecombe Fair;" and didn't the parish clerk bring his fiddle, and Joe Copplestone his double bass, and didn't, and didn't, and didn't——. He could go on all day now that the rush of memory comes over him.

There is one little story he must tell. It happened long ago when he was a young man, and he was 'pon top a load of corn. When it was finished the farmer shouted "'Come down, Jim!' and I said, 'Ow be I to cum down, maister,' for there was no ladder near by. And the farmer said, 'Shut thee eyes and put thee hands in thee pockets and walk about, Jim, and thee'l come down fast enough!'"

"When I du think on't now I du laugh," says the old man.

A drink of zider, and thank'ee kindly.

The carrier's van comes crawling along, and the maid rushes out to the gate with a "Stap min, stap!" and hands a parcel to the driver, with many instructions, and winds up with telling him to buy a yard of ribbon for her at Mr. Skinner's shop, "and here's the money, and fourpence 'ap'ny change, an' doan'ee vurgit."

There is still room in Devon for the carrier and the carrier's van. Motor cars may set the pace upon the road and do all the traffic one day, but when the carrier's van disappears a social institution will have vanished. The van is the village gossip shop upon wheels. It has its secrets and mysteries, and many curious things are hatched in the van, which afterwards fly around the parishes, and bite and sting, and worry and torment, and make life miserable to someone.

A stranger may ride in the van and hear nothing that he can make head or tail of. It's all cryptic to him; but the gossips know whose banns are going to be called next Sunday, and why; and that Tom Plover had hare for supper, and took such a fine salmon to market amongst the cabbages, and no one the wiser; and they know that the Vicar's wife is having an old dress turned for Sundays; and how much is owing to the tallyman in all his "round." This is only one side, for many neighbourly acts are done and talked of, and for those who know and understand, the van is the travelling archive of the unchronicled chronicles of the district.

Penaluna's van in Cornwall, and Tom Zalter's van in Devon, are twins, and both mysteries to an outsider. "Jan Stewer" is a native and rides with Tom Zalter behind Damzel and Prince to Exeter market twice a week, and he has made revelations in slow-moving, musical dialect, glinting with fun. Talking of packing the van with parcels, and boxes, and goods, and living freight, he says:

"'Tis winderful how Tom takes all o't. But he loads up some pin tap the van, and some behind, an' some in under. And 'e putts boxes and 'ampers 'pon he's awn sate, an' then perches hissel up pin tap o' they ontil tis a marvel to me that 'e don't vall off into the rawd.

"And inside the van 'e heaps up the baskets and passels to the back, an' in under th' sates.

"An' then, arter that, 'e finds rume for eight or tain passengers. Yu'd sware 'twas impossible to get it all in, or half o't; but Tom 'ave bin loading up thik van for 'andy thirty year, and 'e knaws 'zackly tu a ninch where to putt the things and the vokes.

"'Coorse, yu got to zit jis where Tom putts 'ee to, an' if 'e gives 'ee aught to carr, or putts anybody in yer lap, yu got to take'm—an' yume lucky if 'tidden Misses Porter, ole Zam Porter's wive down to Pothay, for 'er's tain score if 'er's a nounce!

"But us be all jovial-like and in gude friendship. And if *shude* happen that yu got to take a wumman 'pon each knee, well, 'tiz a chance that wan o'm 'ull be young and gude-lookin'."

The people who ride in motors, and are dressed in fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day, miss these good things of life!

And when the carrier's van disappears, it is time to stroll to the village inn, where the landlord is a bit of a farmer, and a bit of a blacksmith. He reads the paper, and what he does not know would about fill an encyclopædia. But he does know something about sport, and otters in particular, and just now he is telling some young men about the trail of the ole varmint which shewed such good sport last meet. And he has the cleverest terrier that ever went into a hole, or nosed scent, and so on. It is all breezy otter talk this morning, except when the story is about Job Prout who was took in by a gipsy at the fair, and bought the very self-same old mare which he sold last spring at knacker's price. The old mare had been turned out on the salt marshes on the Teign and came back young and frisky, and then the gipsies painted over the star on her forehead, and poor Job Prout was sold.

How the joke was enjoyed, and everyone was jolly this morning.

Back to the farm, and there is Master making up his samples to take to market this afternoon. He's going on horseback, and Missis gives him a warning look, and tells him not to drink the "last glass," for that's the one which always makes trouble. The Master has heard the same advice every market day, and laughs. He looks well on horseback as he trots away—a solid man of fourteen stun.

Market days are the farmer's joy. The land, the land, and nothing but the land, except the crops that grow, and the sheep that graze thereon, and the wool that grows upon the sheep. "Man wants but little here below nor wants that little *long*," is a safe tag for an after-dinner speech where short wool is grown.

The old boys like their market grog, and it is counted a bad sign when they begin to shirk it.

"I've attended this fair for fifty years and never gone home until I have had my twelve glasses of grog; and now I can only drink eight," says one old farmer to another. Then he adds, "I'm a failing man, I know I be," and holds out his hand for a farewell grip. He will not be comforted. Only eight glasses of grog—sixpenn'orths too—and he feels like a man under notice to quit his farm next Michaelmas day.

The market dinner is the place to see what a Devon man can do with a shoulder of mutton, or a goose. If one wants an appetite he can't do better than put up at a moor farm.

Country people who rear chicken and geese, and make butter, and grow garden stuff, are as well posted in market prices as the big

farmers and people in towns. Saturday's prices pass into general knowledge on Sunday evening. After chapel, the women compare notes—so much for ducks, so much for eggs, so much for butter; and then Mary Foale looks for a penny more for her butter than the rest because she has a "separator," and they would have "separators" also if it was'nt for starving the young pigs, for how can you grow pork when all the cream is taken from the milk? Might as well give'm fried water. And next Saturday prices will be better still, because so many strangers are pouring into the land, and will have junkets and cream, and new-laid eggs, and all the rest of it, and money's no object. "And then, why, bless us, us can ate on wan tooth vur a wake or two."

Rare Sam Gillard, who can buy a thousand bullocks at a deal and pay for 'm on the nail, knows just what parish church or chapel to step into on a Sunday evening. If Tom Cobbledick has made up his mind to sell something he'll be there, sure enough. They meet in the porch, or in the churchyard just where the path divides. The proprieties are well observed, and there is nothing for conscience and the fourth commandment to shy at.

"If to-day wasn't to-day, Tom, what would you be luking for them bullocks?"

"Well, if to-day wasn't to-day, I should be looking so much, Mr. Gillard."

The next morning the dealer's man rides into the farmyard with a cheque, and drives away the stock.

Big dealers don't chaffer and haggle much now. A nod, a shake of the head, and the thing is over. Chaffering is left to the little men now-a-day.

Strangers are not supposed to know anything about these things; and, as a rule, country people are very shy about matters which intimately concern them. The Devon man is not so easily drawn into familiar conversation as his Cornish cousin, and he is not so imaginative—not so apt to tip with rainbow hues everything he touches, and to find reasons for all the signs and wonders of the heavens and the earth.

In the villages the people are very civil, indeed gentle, and the further, in reason, one is from the beaten track the more deferential the people are, and the more one marks the manners of a past century in rural England.

Countrymen accept things pretty much at face value, and are great on what they call "faxs"—and a fact is something to be accepted without wonder. "I have heard tell of many wonders, but

"THE OTTER HUNT."

never saw any," an intelligent man will say; whereas a man in a similar condition of life in Cornwall will add wonder to the most common incidents of daily life.

One is Celtic and the other Saxon, and so race may explain much; but on the moors especially men seem to have brooded behind the plough, and worked the soil, and tended cattle and sheep so long as to have become too tired to wonder. The glory and loveliness of earth and sky have come and gone, and passed them by whilst their eyes were upon the ground.

Perhaps the earth has been a hard foster-mother on the moors, where there were huge boulders to be broken up, and the ground to be cleared before a crop could grow. Everything, in his mind, was made to centre on the land and the growth of things. The sky was made for rain, and the sun for warming the land and making things grow, and man was made to work the land. The artistic sense has been long suppressed in men who look upon heather and poppies, blue cornflowers, and all things glowing in the sunshine, as so much loss, and fit only to be burned.

At Moor Farm the man was "Master," and the woman "Missis." The man reigned out of doors; in the house the woman was supreme. There was no "subjection" of woman; no interference with "mere man." The legitimate spheres of influence were well understood here, and there was no clashing of authority.

The household is small, but all are workers at Moor Farm. There is only one son, and the Master has him in hand, breaking him into harness. There are two daughters—the eldest is at home, and takes her full share of work in the house, and dairy, and poultry yard, and here dairy and poultry produce are made to pay current household expenses. The second daughter is at the High School, Exeter, and is just now on a visit to her mother's old home on Exmoor. This young lady is "going out into the world," on her own account, when qualified. There were three maid servants about the house, and the eye of the Missis was over all and at all times. She took girls in the rough, "broke them in," and made them useful. The Missis had a gentle voice and a firm hand, and it seemed quite easy to have good servants in a house where the Missis was.

And the Master, out of doors, was as supreme as man could be. What he said was law, but in the house he fell into his place, and the Missis kept the accounts.

On one subject only did Master and Missis disagree. She was Exmoor bred—came somewhere from the land of the Doones—and

would have it that Exmoor mutton was sweeter than Dartmoor, and the Exmoor ponies were of better breed than Dartmoor ponies. At the end of twenty years they argued still, and were no nearer than at the beginning.

In one thing they were united—they loved "sport," which included fishing, fox-hunting, otter-hunting, coursing and rabbitting, and Exeter races once a year. The Master played skittles with the cheese or the round ball, three-in-a-rank, or diamond shape, just as you pleased; and if there was a wrestling match within reasonable distance he'd attend. When a young man he had a reputation, and got so many scars upon his shins—which he will carry to his grave—that the Missis set her face against wrestling in the Devonshire fashion. Without kicking wrestling, in her opinion, was "sport," with kicking, it was brutal. However, the Master went to matches round about, and when he fancied a man was able to give him "a wrinkle or two." Life on Moor Farm was breezy enough for any ordinary man from town.

Love of out-door sport is bred in the Devon man. Plymouth is said to be the most steeplechasingest place in the Universe. The reputation may, or may not, be deserved, but in the season it is difficult to find more steeplechasing sympathies than at Exeter, or in the usually sleepy little town of Totnes.

Steeplechasing is no mere child's play here for horse or rider, unless they should happen to be made of indiarubber, or some such unbreakable material. The Devon man's idea of "fair hunting country" for a steeplechase leaves little to be desired in the shape of risk. Water jumps and hurdles don't count for much. A stiff fence with a ten-foot drop into a shady lane, and then a real facer on the other side, is the sort of thing a Devon man likes, and rides miles to see.

No out-door sports come amiss. Foxes are well preserved now—thanks greatly, it is said, to the influence and example of "Passen Jack" Russell, the last of the real old sporting divines in Devon. Most of the clergy are sportsmen, but of a milder type. In the north of the county foxes were formerly trapped and destroyed in the most unsportsmanlike manner. In fact, Mr. Fox was an outlaw, and when one was trapped or caught red-mouthed about a farm, the church bells were set ringing, and the death-knell was rung over the death of a sinner in no very Christian spirit. For the purposes of sport, "Passen Jack" at last got the fox respected, and lived long enough to receive an epistle from a farmer willing to give his wife a "new

gown" if she would not complain about the preservation of foxes. The epistle is genuine:—

Sir John Russell,—

"Yeur honour will plaize to cum up to Ben Twitching wi' th' dogs; us be ate out o' they voxes. Mistiss kipth on a-telling and zeth, us shan't ha' a geuse to kill come Christmas. Bit I've a-zaid, I'd gi' her a new gown to mak' up for't; zo, her han't a-vexed so much zince. But do ee cum and gi' us a bit o' sport, sir.

"Yeur honour's humbl sarvent,

"T. T."

The late Earl of Portsmouth stood Reynard's friend and had "Passen Jack" to back him up, and his lordship penned his acknowledgments in a handsome tribute to the reverend gentleman's memory as a sportsman. "When I first began keeping hounds he taught me much, and was of the greatest possible assistance to me. * * * * His intuitive knowledge of the run of a fox, even in a country strange to him, was marvellous. I remember well one occasion in Dorset, after a fast and straight run the fox was headed and the hounds brought to a slight check. At that moment a fresh fox was halloed ahead, while some of the field, who viewed him, did their best to get the hounds on to his line. Russell never moved; and on someone remarking that he was taking matters very coolly, he quietly answered, 'The hunted fox is behind; that is a fresh fox.' My huntsman was of the same opinion, and while he was making his cast I viewed the hunted fox which had laid down. We got on to him again, and, in a sharp burst of ten minutes more, rolled him over in the open." His lordship added, "Many similar anecdotes of Russell I could relate."

Nothing in the shape of "sport" comes amiss to a Devonian. How can it in a land wherein every brook has its salmon and trout; wherein the badger and otter and fox are still at home, and every wild bird may be flushed upon the moors? A good otter hunt stirs his blood most. People say there is something about the otter which brings out a Devonshire man's qualities of patience and cunning, and tries his temper to the breaking point, but without making him lose it—quite. When an otter has baffled the field and the dogs are called off, and everyone is going home tired and wet and disappointed, the hunters speak of it as an old "roog," meaning thereby something complimentary and endearing.

To be called an "old vox" is to stand pretty well in popular esteem in country places where people have genuine admiration for

nimbleness of wit and capacity for getting out of scrapes. Take the run of them, the people you meet are slow, and look on it as a virtue to do what they are told. As it was in the beginning, I suppose, so it is now. A lady told me one day a little story which was told her by her mother, who heard it from her mother, and my informant handed it on as though there was no change. It was this: her grandmother wished to hire a servant maid, and she selected three. Then she sent them, one by one, to walk down the garden and return to the house another way.

Across the garden path she placed a broom.

Number one made the tour, and skipped over the broom.

Number two kicked it on one side.

Number three picked it up, and she was hired.

I was told that you may rely on having your instructions carried out to the letter; but a waggoner, for instance, will return with empty waggon if his load is not precisely where he was told to look for it. A farmer sent a young man twenty miles to a harness maker's with an order, and the man returned saying the shop was shut. Which was true: the tradesman had moved one door round the corner, and the young man made no inquiry. No flood, or peril of the road would have prevented the man reaching the market town, but his wit was not nimble enough to suggest his peeping round the corner. Nimbleness of wit is, therefore, held in high estimation.

The fox is the popular standard. When you hear of "a voxey-eyed little lawyer" you may be sure he is a clever man; but the lawyer who can "make water run up hill" is more than clever—he is a genius of the Coleridge and Karslake order, both Devon men.

A countryman will generally illustrate the qualities of people by qualities of animals; and as most countrymen are born naturalists they will tell you the queerest stories about people, which they illustrate by something which a fox, or hare, or otter did to save its skin. I said one day to a man that the police were busy searching the villages for a man "wanted" for committing a daring burglary at Torquay. My man said nothing for a while, and then broke out with—

"I zay, maister, but they won't vind'n."

"Why do you think so?" I asked.

"'Cause they shud look among the varmint." Then he told me he was working one day in a field close to a warren and a fox passed him, and he was just spent, and the hounds close on him. Now, what did he do? Why, he jumped into the warren and hung himself by

the teeth among the vermin, and held on like grim death until the field was all clear again, and then he just dropped down and slunk away. My country friend was very sure that the police would find the burgling varmint amongst other varmints, and not in villages where the scent would lie.

He took his illustration from what he knew best. Toads, vipers, otters, badgers, foxes, crop up at all times, and in all company; and if you hear that a man told a story which made "the ole mare laugh," you'll know it was a clinker.

THE OTTER HUNT.

"Of course, you will come with us to-morrow. Old Bagworthy says we shall see sport. There's a regular old varmint, and he knows'n well, down by the Lower Weir. Ess, f'y, there will be sport."

So I went, with the rest, to see an otter hunt. All the family went, and everybody we sighted was bent on going to meet the hounds. It was a good field. All the gentry were there, and as many ladies as gentlemen, in short serge skirts, and thick boots, and sailor hatted. They came out for business, and grew eager as the hunt went on.

There was some interest and excitement in seeing the hounds work along a brook, where the trout are, all overhung with wood and bushes. There were disappointing "touches," for otter scent, though strong, is very deceptive, and old hunters say that when it should be present it is nowhere, and sometimes the hounds will give tongue, making the valleys echo, after the animal has gone away to sea for a day or two. An experienced old "roog" would be one of the most difficult of created things to capture, were it not obliged to rise to the surface to "vent."

The ladies talked continually about pretty "strokes" across the bends, and shrewd "feathering" along the banks, and the quality of the "music." They appeared to know each hound by his note—his "bell note," or his "high-pitched squeak,"—and grew more and more excited, until, at last, a clipping little terrier found its way underground and persuaded the otter to show himself, and the hunters, who were guarding the shallows—called "stickles"—were all eyes for the first sound or ripple.

Ours was an old "roog," who had been often enough in peril and saved his fur by his wits, so he held the enemy too cheap, doubled

back under the pack, and then took to land, and shot away like a rocket up the steep slopes beyond.

It was a splendid, though audacious move. The Master of Moor Farm was by my side, and his eyes opened wide with admiration. Before the hounds left water the otter had a good start, and went across country at racing pace. He was thorough-bred of his kind, and I should never have thought a swimming, diving, fish-eating animal could ever have covered the ground like this for nearly two miles, when he took refuge in a brook.

Now the otter showed his game side. He might have slipped back to the river and got away, but he actually waited for the hounds to come up, and then made for a brook, where he showed sport, but had no chance. Then the huntsmen checked the dogs and let him get fairly away to the river, where he showed himself a fine swimmer, and then took sanctuary in the bank.

Splendid! said everybody. Scent was weak and dogs at fault; and once again the old "roog" held his enemies too cheap. He landed once more, and slipped up a narrow ditch wherein there was more mud than water, and the hounds were too quick for him. There was no getting away, so he fought to the finish!

The Master of Moor Farm threw up his hat and then danced on it, and "tallied" and "hoicked" until his breath failed him. Then he shook hands with me, and "tallied" and "hoicked" again, and there was shouting all up and down. It was splendid! The run of the season! The old varmint ought to be in a glass case! Not for a fortune would the Master have had me miss the sport.

The cunning and pluck and fight of the otter seems to touch a sympathetic chord somewhere in the Devonian's breast. "Devon die-hards" have won their honours by sea and land, and in the otter is a kindred spirit. After the kill the field will often wish secretly that the varmint had got away, so as to show sport another day.

The huntsman gave the otter every chance, and he had two good opportunities of saving his fur.

There is a widespread opinion that the otter likes the sport.

To show that the animal is not hunted in an unsportsmanlike spirit, the Master told me that last year a first-class pack only killed eleven times in forty days!

If the otter were not hunted the Master said he would have a bad time of it because he is so destructive in trout and salmon streams. The animal stupidly leaves on the banks the tails and pieces of fish which he does not want. Even poachers go mad when

they see such waste. In the water the animal is so expert a swimmer that it will sometimes bite a piece out of a salmon, and salmon with healed otter bites are familiar in Devon streams. The otter is a deep-sea angler as well, and has been captured in lobster-pots.

The Master gave me three reasons—"all good uns"—for the hunting of the otter.

First, the hunters liked it.

Second, the dogs liked it.

Third, the otters—well, who could say that the otters did not like it?

Was I prepared, as an honest and honourable man, he asked triumphantly, to say that what I had seen was not "sport," and that the otter was not really proud in showing off his fighting qualities?

This ingenious shifting of the burden of proof upon me was too much.

The Master told me that one famous pack of hounds had been in existence for over fifty years.

The sport is not likely to be abandoned until there are no more otters to hunt.

CHAPTER X.

"BE y*u* promised?"

"No, I baint. Be y*u*?"

"No."

"Then shall us mit on Zunday at Cross Lanes?"

"That's how it all came about last Michaelmas Eve, and now Mary is 'promised,'" said the Missis, interpreting my glance of inquiry as soon as the girl's back was turned.

The bit of ribbon which the carrier brought on his return journey, and the etcetras with which she finished her toilette for going out, made a wonderful difference in the maid's appearance. And there was that flush of happiness upon her face which makes youth beautiful.

"Yes, she's 'promised.'" To be "promised" is to be engaged or betrothed; and Mary was "promised" to a young man who was doing his best to cultivate a bit of rough land, which he got on lease, at

nominal rent. The land had all the appearance of waste, well cropped with boulders, and had to be broken up with a mattock. A most unpromising occupation, one would think. These "takes" are common—a man rents a bit of land which will grow something, and then he "takes" so much waste in hand and breaks it up, and makes it, somehow, productive.

"The best looking maids beant always in the parlour," said the Master.

"Nor the best looking men, either," said the Missis.

The Master beamed. He was in a happy mood after the hunt. He told me that Mary was to have a good send-off; she was to be married from the farm, and what a pity it was that I should not be able to look in the big kitchen and see them all at it. Mary had been a good girl—none better—and the Missis had promised that she should be married from the farm. This was a certificate of character and respectability, and Mary would tell her children that she was married from Moor Farm, just as the Missis's own mother made it her boast to this day that she was married from Squire Popple's. "The Missis is doing it, and the maid won't go away empty-handed, I tell ee," said the Master.

Wages are sweet, no doubt, but can be made sweeter still; and it was pleasant to know that there is still in the world something besides wages between mistress and maid.

Mary's "promised" was William, and I asked the Master what his prospects were, who said nothing but work, downright hard work during his life, but if he had health he should never want parish pay!

Moor Farm was not large, and the Master was an advocate for big farms and plenty of capital. Poor farmers, he said, were always meeting with misfortunes. "Their untended, neglected children are scalded, their one half-starved horse breaks his neck when straining himself to get something to eat from the other side of a fence which he is too weak to reach. Then their pig dies and their cows are dry. Their land is starved and so are their poultry, so that they ain't worth really what they fetch. If, by chance, a pound is made, then the landlord or the rate-collector wants it."

According to the Master, the condition of an ordinary labourer was preferable to that of a small farmer without capital.

Then I asked him, what he thought of the cry of "Back to the Land," and he said, "The land wants no one back to it unless he has money,—money enough for the day, and a little to spare. If a man

"A FAIR APPLE COUNTRY."

paid no rent on a small holding, the local taxes, he said, were quite enough to cripple him, in the majority of cases.

"I have two thousand pounds on this farm: we work and we live, and that is all. What can a man do on the land without capital?"

The Master was on his own ground, and was happy. He sat back in his chair and thrust his fingers inside his unbuttoned waistcoat. His round face grew rounder, he was a happy and contented "dumpling."

A Devon man never minds being called "dumpling"; on the contrary, he likes it, as reminiscent of his youthful days, when he filled his pockets with Farmer Grice's apples, over the way.

This is a fine apple country in places, and the orchards are really worth looking at twice a year—in the spring when in bloom, and in the autumn when the fruit is bending the boughs underneath which, in the short grass, lie thousands upon thousands of "wind falls" in all stages of ripeness and decay. And then the colouring—the tender white and pink of the blossoms, and the yellows, greens, russets and reds of the fruit!

In the apple country a farm without an orchard is rare; farmers make their own cider, and when they want something extra good they mature it in rum puncheons and sherry casks. Then cider is a drink for the gods! and mortals not used to the beverage should be wary, or they may be "pixie-led" on the way home. It is worth while dropping in and having a chat with the farmer when the apples are being crushed in what is called the "pound," which is a circular granite trough, into which the apples are thrown, and in which they are crushed, or "pounded," by a revolving stone wheel. Blind old Dobbin outside, walking round and round at the rate of one mile per hour, is the motive power. The picture, of its kind, is pretty, and the aroma from the fresh crushed fruit is delicious. The thick, cloudy juice trickling from the trough is cider, and in its new state is sweet to the taste and non-intoxicating. You may drink it like water, but it won't keep "new," it will ferment, or "turn off." A teetotaller drinks cider in his own country; at all events, he may without being placed under ban.

George the Third, of pious memory, took a great interest in the making of cider and apple dumplings during a visit he paid to Exeter. Peter Pindar, a Devonshire man, got hold of the story of the King's visit to a labourer's cottage where he saw the good wife making apple dumplings. What puzzled him was how on earth the apples got inside the paste which had no visible join or seam. He expected to see the

woman sew up the dough with needle and cotton! As Peter Pindar is out of fashion now I'll quote a few lines.

You must imagine that the King is tired of hunting and

"Entered through curiosity a cot,
Where sat a poor old woman and her pot.

"The wrinkled, blear-eyed, good old granny,
In this same cot illumed by many a cranny,
Had finished apple dumplings for her pot;
In tempting row the naked dumplings lay,
When lo! the monarch, in his usual way,
Like lightning spoke, 'What's this? what's this? what? what?'

"Then taking up a dumpling in his hand,
His eyes with admiration did expand,
And oft did Majesty the dumpling grapple:
'Tis monstrous, monstrous hard, indeed,' (he cried):
'What makes it, pray, so hard?' The dame replied
Low curtsying, 'Please, your Majesty, the apple.'
"'Very astonishing indeed! Strange thing!'
(Turning the dumpling round, rejoined the King)
'Strange I should never of a dumpling dream!
But, Goody, tell me, where, where, where's the *seam*?'

"'Sir, there's no seam' (quoth she); 'I never knew
That folks did apple dumplings *sew*.'
'No' (cried the staring monarch with a grin),
'How, how the devil got the apple in?'"

Ancient mystic rites in connection with the growth and cultivation of apples now survive in what is called "wassailing" or "toasting" the apple trees on Christmas or on Twelfth-day eve. Sometimes it is called "shooting" the apple trees because a noise is made with guns. It is now an occasion for a feast in some farm houses, wherein people assemble and form a procession to the orchard, where the trees are saluted with the firing of guns, the singing of songs, and as much noise as it is possible to make. The master of the ceremonies seizes a branch of the tree and holds it earthwards while the people shout or sing—"Health to thee, good apple tree!" *

All present join hands and dance, and then drink the health of the trees in cider, after which a libation is poured over a piece of toast, which is called "basting," and the toast is fixed on a bough for

*The idea is that the fruit trees are gratified by the polite attention paid to them, and will bear more or less fruit "as you do give them good wassailing." There are several versions of the song sung; the following is one:

Oh apple tree, I wassail thee!
In hopes that thou wilt blow,
To blow and to bear well;
So merry let us be,
For the Lord doth know where we shall be
To be merry another year.

the early robins to eat in the hope it will bring good luck. And when all the orchards in the parish are thus wassailed there is jollification and revelry in the farm houses. Christmas Eve and old Twelfth Night are merry still where the custom is observed.

Harvest suppers and wassailing the apple-trees were eagerly looked forward to in all parts of Devon, and the old people tell wonderful tales of what used to happen when the pixies came into the kitchen and blew the candles out, and the maids were kissed in the dark without knowing who kissed them!

Things went very well then in Merrie Devon.

There is a survival of Elizabethan England at Hayes Barton, the birthplace of Raleigh, on the night of the fourth of November, when the church bells ring merrily, and the parish pays for ale and "farthing cakes." The ringers drink the ale, and the children scramble for the cakes. This is local, and the origin of the winter frolic is said to have been lost.

Three kinds of roads are in Devon—"good, bad, and none-at-all." The main roads are well kept up—cyclist, motorist, carriage, cart, or waggon-driver have little to complain of the highways. When you get off them you take your chance, just as in other places. Roads which are "short cuts," and roads which terminate somewhere in duck-ponds in farm places are best avoided. Moor roads are often still what they were originally, namely, tracks worn first by cattle and men, and then worked into some sort of shape by carts and carriers' vans. People often talk of the moors as though a chart of navigation were needed to cross them, which may have been true enough at one time, when the tracks were full of "puksey holes," in which man or horse might be "stogged" up to the knees, or higher still. Things improve slowly on moors on which it is no man's interest to spend much money. A track always ends somewhere, so it is wise, in case of doubt, to stick to it.

In South Devon are narrow winding lanes know as "bridle paths," which are, perhaps, the most beautiful of their kind in the universe. Bridle paths have a tricky, wandering, zig-zag way of their own. Bridle paths were only intended for horses, and were never wider than for two pack-horses to pass each other—now they are narrower still, so overgrown are they, in places, with brier and bramble, honeysuckle and convolvuli, making sweet-scented hanging gardens of the tall hedge thorns. Then below are the rank grasses and ferns and foxgloves and wild flowers, down to the tiny pimpernel.

These old bridle paths had some design in them, and were much favoured by smugglers of old when they led from the sea coast, along the cliffs, and enabled the bold "free-traders" to hide their wines and spirits, tea, laces, and tobacco in secret stores and caverns. The bridle paths avoided the main roads, and were always playing "bo-peep" with sunlight, so they ran through the most beautiful and wildest spots at times.

High hedges are the rule everywhere, and these make the country look beautiful and refreshing when one is rushing through at top speed. Only when one is walking, and wants to get good views from five-barred gates and open gaps, these tall hedges are apt to become obstructive and spoil what promised to be good perspective. It is an old complaint that a man may travel through Devon without seeing a flock of sheep except on the moors, where fences are low. Still, the high hedges look fresh and beautiful from railway carriage windows, and afford splendid shelter to sheep and cattle during cold high winds and storms.

Bridle paths must be seen and walked through, and if one is in a happy and contented frame of mind at the time, so much the better. In the verses "Marriage is like a Devonshire lane," the reverend Vicar of Broadclyst gives one the right key—

> "In a Devonshire lane, as I trotted along
> T'other day, much in want of a subject for song,
> Thinks I to myself, I have hit on a strain;
> Sure, marriage is much like a Devonshire lane.
> In the first place 'tis long, and when once you are in it
> It holds you so fast as a cage does a linnet;
> For howe'er rough and dirty the road may be found
> Drive forward you must, there is no turning round!"

There are more verses in this strain, and there is no place in the world where you can read them with so much pleasure as in one of these bridle paths. If you poke about and inquire why these paths, so little used now, were so popular at one time, you will find out that thrifty people used them for the purpose of avoiding the payment of toll on the turnpike roads. "To cheat the pike" was as attractive then as "doing" a railway company is now!

The present generation have probably no better idea of what a "pillion" was than I had before shown a clever little pen and ink sketch made at least a century ago. I fancy that it was a social and sociable contrivance before wheels could be used. The county families were all so connected by blood and marriage that everybody was cousin to everybody else, and house parties were family parties, and

guests stayed at one another's houses just as long as they liked. In fact, it would not have been worth visiting at all, in the "good old days," when treacherous roads were full of puksey-holes, or soft places, and there might be highwaymen to face, and all sorts of adventures possible, unless one could stay a long time without "eating out one's welcome." Ladies were in the habit in those days of riding upon pillions, and possibly liked it, though it appeared from the sketch to be an admirable contrivance for giving the greatest amount of discomfort to the man, the woman, and the horse.

Poor horse! covered from head to tail with the pillion, with leather protections for the legs of the man attached to it. The lady sat behind with her hand in a loop of leather tied on to the man's girdle. The riders were bumped along, hour after hour, the animal stumbling over rocky places, and falling into bogs and puksey-holes. How ladies could manage to do long journeys, and live, seems wonderful. When next I read of Court beauties and women of gentle birth riding "en pillion" from castle to castle, and from country house to country house, I shall have some pity in my heart for them, especially if the journey is at Christmas, when the tracks were snow-covered, and the danger of being smothered in a snow drift was added to the discomfort of being bumped to death.

I fancy a lot of romance would be needful to make a motor-driven lady of to-day enamoured of jogging along country lanes on a pillion! At country houses and wayside inns short square blocks were placed for ladies' use when getting on or off their pillions. These old relics become interesting when one knows what use was made of them.

CHAPTER XI.

NATIVES say "Ex'ter*"—it is their tribute to greatness. If a man were brought here in hypnotic sleep and awakened in the High Street he would know that he was in a county town with a history. The old Guildhall and a certain refinement in the first persons he saw would tell him as much. The first view of

* "Me, me wive, an' little Joe Dexter,
Us all agreed to zet oft vur Ex'ter."—Old Song.

the Cathedral would add to his knowledge. He is really in the capital of Devon, where the pulse of history may be felt. A long procession of crowned heads, in joy and in sorrow, has passed through these antiquated streets.

There is a Castle near by, where a man may be tried and hung —or he may escape, even with the rope around his neck and the bolt drawn, as happened not so very long ago in this old City, wherein the presence of the invisible may be felt at every turn.

The right to hang is one of the distinctions of which a city may be proud, and generally secures the right to be called Capital, and to give inhabitants the right to the air superior. For instance, an "Ex'ter" man looks over the head, or through the body, of a mere Plymouthian, who possesses no hanging rights. The curious may trace this air superior to various causes; but the fact remains that lords of manors, and other great people, who had the power of life and death over the humble in this land, always looked taller than other men; and cities wherein a man is hanged by the neck somehow put on airs and manners. Exeter has certainly an air of distinction.

The City arms bears the motto "Ever Faithful," which some say is well deserved, as the people, always slow, were apt to fight and struggle for causes long out of fashion. After a cause was lost in the rest of the country Exeter would struggle on, and so become "Semper Fidelis," the champion of lost causes. Plymouth people, for example, talk like this, by way of set off.

The citizens are, however, very proud of their city and its traditions. It had a history before the Romans came, and then went on making history until the Norman came. William found Exeter a hard nut to crack, and Devon men tell you with pride that if the rest of England only had their grit the victorious Norman would have been driven into the sea.

The last word was not said at Hastings, but at Exeter. After the battle of Senlac, with Dover, Canterbury, London and Winchester in the hands of the Conqueror, the great task was the subjugation of the West. This is not mere boast. Freeman confirms this view. The whole West, he says, was ready for defence, and volunteers flowed in from other parts. At no moment, since the battle of Senlac, had the hopes of deliverance been higher. Sir F. Palgrave confirms Freeman. The centre of Saxon opposition after Harold was slain was Exeter, "which would by no means accept the Norman domination except upon conditions." What is important as showing the intellectual fibre of the people is the statement that the men of Exeter were

seeking to form a general league amongst the British burghs against the common enemy. For two years the men of Exeter fought and fell, and rose and fought again against foe and famine, and at the end, William, the master-strategist of his age, entered into only an uncertain possession, and the grim castle of the Red Mount arose to awe the people. Rougemont Castle is the Conqueror's tribute in stone to the splendid valour of Devon.

The same spirit crops up all through the centuries, and is alive now, for an Exonian admires courage and a good fight against odds. A man or a dog who will fight "down to the ground" he loves; and it is the pluck of the beast which makes all Devon men so partial to otters. In no part of the world is the otter held in such high estimation for "sport." When a son of Devon is under a cloud the Devonian erects a statue in his honour. Never desert a Buller!

The "Ever Faithful" city has experienced many ups and downs of fortune, but has never lost its county air and breeding. The old Spanish don of the play, starving in a dismal garret, cooks his humble herring with priceless lace upon his collar and cuffs. He was Castillian and lace became him. Exeter makes its own atmosphere—it has its hunts and balls, assembly rooms and masters of ceremonies; and, in truth, Beau Nash might pay a visit here in a sedan chair, as well as in any city of England.

For centuries the Lords of Devon had town houses in Exeter. The Courtenays, Poltimores, Fortescues and Bedfords were as princes, with princely retinues, and held receptions with all the ceremony of royalty. The smaller gentry flocked to the City; and generation after generation left its mark, which is indelible now.

Some of these town houses possessed the aristocratic exclusiveness of a quadrangle, and were reported to be connected with the country outside the city walls by dark, mysterious underground passages. Queen Henrietta—the unfortunate wife of Charles I.—gave birth to a daughter in Bedford House,* and then was secreted in the house with mullioned oriel windows, now belonging to Lord Poltimore, until she could escape into France. A portrait of the Princess, named Henrietta, after her mother, is in the Guildhall, near by that of General Monk—an Exeter man—who played so conspicuous a part in bringing about the Restoration. Some of these aristocratic

*The Church register of St. Edmund's contains the following entry—

"1644. Our most gratious King Charles upon the 16 daye of June, 1644, had a daughter borne in this City at Bedford House, being at thatte tyme the Queen's Court, between the houres of ten and eleven of the Clock in the forenoon being the Lord's daye whome God blesse and preserve. Her name is Henerita Maria."

town houses are public institutions now, and what remains of oak carving, and panelling, and wonderful plaster ceilings all tell a tale of domestic and refined grandeur.

The town house of the Courtenays was in the Cathedral Close, and is now devoted to literature and science, the abiding place of the Devon and Exeter Institution. The Courtenays, Earls of Devon, are woven into the web and woof of county history. At one time there was a chance, and a good one too, for young Edward Courtenay marrying his cousin Mary, and sitting on the throne of England. This family seem to have fallen short of the highest pinnacles of fame simply through some "trick in the blood." The old local proverb, "one to make and one to spend," shows how the people viewed the family trick, or weakness, of dissipating during one generation much of the wealth and influence and high honour gained by its predecessor. Then, when the fortunes of the house were low a "good" Earl of Devon would arise, and all go right again—and so on, in alternate generations.

Edward Courtenay, handsome and young, was released from the Tower by Queen Mary just at the time that she felt herself secure upon the throne, and wanted to marry. By way of special favour he was created an Earl. The stars in their courses fought for him. The Church, represented by Bishop Gardiner, favoured the match; his own mother, the young Queen's confidante and bedfellow, sang his praises. An alliance with the Courtenays of Devon would carry the West and give stability to the throne! Nothing was wanting but to name the day and call the banns!

Here the "luck" of the Courtenays came in. It was young Edward's turn, apparently, to put obstacles in the way of greatness. Liberated from the Tower, wherein he had been confined from the age of ten, handsome, an Earl, he joined the young bloods, painted the town red, and himself black in the estimation of his cousin, the Queen, who spent much time in private devotion. So Courtenay eclipsed his own bright star, and Mary, giving out in public that it would be unbecoming in her to marry a subject, and complaining in private of Courtenay's excesses, turned her eyes towards Philip of Spain.

Had Devon given England a king just then!

The City has its commercial zone, and one knows it quickly. The county air is not there; and the people don't seem the same as when you meet them in the High Street, and in the Cathedral Close. Perhaps they change; perhaps the environment changes them.

"THE GUILDHALL IS VERY OLD NOW."

The Guildhall is very old now. Its granite pillars are said to be bowed with the weight of age. Kings and Queens have sat at its festive board, and it is said that in its archives priceless historical documents are perishing. This may not be true; but, if true, it is pitiful.

The good people of Plymouth made a determined fight years ago to snuff out Exeter, and become not only the capital of Devon but of Devon and Cornwall. It was a bold idea, and worthy the ambition of a go-ahead people bent upon supremacy; and it was acted on at a time when the judges were in favour of holding the Cornish Assizes at Plymouth instead of at Bodmin. Then, why not the Devon Assizes be removed from Exeter, and let Plymouth do the hanging for both counties, and enjoy the kudos? Plymouth set to work and built a fine Guildhall, wherein there was space for Crown and Nisi Prius Courts, retiring rooms, and all things needful for the change.

The ancient Guildhall at Exeter, with its bowed granite legs calmly blinked up and down and across the High Street, and said, nothing. Its nerves were not shaken by the grand Gothic rival at Plymouth. It did not even condescend to move, but went about its business with the aristocratic calm of centuries. The "County" was behind, and Exeter remained the Capital with a big C, leaving pushing Plymouth to represent Commerce, also with a big C. Whether this is to be the final struggle or not for county ascendency another generation may perhaps know.

Being a society place Exeter had its Theatre—and had it early. Behind Allhallows Church lived Edmund Kean, in rooms wherein he eked out a poor living as an actor by teaching dancing, fencing, and elocution. The narrow passage from the High Street is long enough to enable one to switch off his thoughts from motor cars, and big salaries to "stars," and think of days when Edmund Kean lived from hand to mouth here as one of the "stock" company, doing journeyman's work, and doing it very well for years.

It is in a street like this old Goldsmith Street that one gets a sort of grip of a life like Kean's so long as it remained in shadow. The great Siddons damned him with faint praise—he acted very well, she said, but "there was too little of him to make a great actor." It was in the old Exeter Theatre that he developed his powers, the prophetic instinct being strong within him that one day he would be great, yet fearing the tragedy of greatness, lest one day he should go mad! It was whilst living in these rooms, teaching dancing and fencing, that he grew "great," on a stock salary of two guineas per week; and

worthy citizens no doubt thought him "mad" already when they met him staggering home in sunshine, still clad in the costume of *Richard III.*

It is not so long ago since people remembered Kean living in these dark rooms—a sallow-faced little man, with an eye that bespoke divinity. The Turk's Head Inn, in the High Street, was the place where the choice spirits of Bohemia then met in a room, up a passage. Kean left Exeter on foot and returned in a coach and four. He was really "great," but he didn't forget the room up the passage, not he! The coach rattled down the street and stopped opposite the Turk's Head Inn—a little figure quickly descends, runs up the passage, enters the room, and with a Harlequin's spring leaps on the table in the midst of the astonished guests, and exclaims, "Richard's himself again!" So runs the story.

The city has had its Theatre for over one hundred and fifty years, but the drama played in some sort of playhouse here goes back to Elizabethan times.

The story is told that Satan himself appeared upon the stage here. This is, perhaps, the only occasion upon which his majesty made a professional public appearance on the stage as an actor. Dr. Faustus was being played. Enter *Mephistopheles*, and by his side——

The *debut* was not successful from the manager's point of view. It emptied the house! His Satanic majesty was but a poor "star," after all!

The Theatre here has gone through its baptism of fire three times, and is now said to be fire-proof. The "divine" Siddons played here in "legitimate" drama. Satan did not interfere with her, for Sarah had eyes and a tongue, and knew how to use both. She appeared in the *Gamester*. She had to repeat the lines—

"Would that these eyes had heaven's own lightning, that with a look, thus I might blast thee!"

The "divine" Sarah retired with passion hot within her, and rushed to her room.

"You've brought me porter, boy; I asked for beer!"

Never to his dying day did that small boy forget the unearthly fires of those tragic eyes.

Mrs. Siddons was at her zenith when she played here. "Dr. Johnson had bowed down and worshipped. Sir Joshua Reynolds painted his name on the hem of her garment in his portrait of her as the 'Tragic Muse.' Statesmen were glad, when she played, to sit among the fiddlers; the King shed tears at her acting, and the Queen

appointed her teacher of elocution to the Royal Princesses, *without any emolument*." Was there ever a more brilliant star?

The motor car seems singularly out of place in this City. There is a want of refinement about the throbbing, eager motor in a City in which sedan chairs seem in harmony. One would never be surprised at seeing a sedan chair borne to the portico of the old Guildhall, or to meet one in Bedford Square, or perambulating the gardens, north and south. Patches, powder and fans is the sort of tone that goes admirably here.

Exeter is certainly one of those old cities in which the motor is out of place. When this was the headquarters of the woollen trade, pack horses came here in strings and put up at the old "hostelries," of which some remain and remind us of life in the time of Chaucer. I suppose all the traffic of the county was done by horses with and without packs and panniers, with saddles, and pads, and pillions, and Exeter Fair was one of the sights of the West. In the old side streets leading to the river, with their ancient churches and chapels, quaint doorways and windows, deep shadows and repose, we are brought face to face with the times when the merchant adventurers of the city trafficked "with the realms of Fraunce and dominions of the Frenche King," and dipped into their purses, and found money for the daring deeds of daring seamen upon the high seas.

The motor is, however, here, and will stay, of course, but there is no place for it in the picture of old Exeter. The city may, in time, adapt itself to the motor, for the man with pickaxe and shovel, and the contractor with speculation in his eye, are abroad.

The "Ever Faithful" City has been made much of by royalties from the days of King John down to those of Queen Victoria, and the citizens have been accustomed to municipal government ever since they had anything to govern. One thing and another bred in them so independent a spirit that they would have their little squabbles, even in the presence of royalty itself. Good George the Third and good Queen Charlotte were, on one occasion, guests of the Dean. The most distinguished people got up an address and signed it, and marched in procession to the Dean's house to present it. Party politics were strong, and Mr. Dean smelt a rat. He denied the King, and marched him off to the Cathedral. His most gracious majesty had no knowledge, it was said, of church architecture, and assured Mr. Dean that he very much admired the purity of the whitewash!

The opposition were avenged.

CHAPTER XII.

THERE is an Academic, as well as a Society, side to Exeter. The old Cathedral has looked down on eight centuries, and here, as in all cathedral towns, there is an air encouraging to academic repose. I always fancy it is not absent from St. Paul's, in the great city of London, even during the most feverish hours of the day; and that at night, in the lightest of grey mists, the busy churchyard has the repose of a place of peace and prayer. At Exeter, one walks through a narrow, old-fashioned lane into the Close with a sensation of peace upon him, which prepares him to enter the great West door, and lift the soul upwards in the dim, religious light.

Here are three instructions from guide books which may be useful:—

I. The best way to enter the Close is by St. Martin's Lane, and see the building from a point on which its whole length is revealed in a retreating perspective, which allows the eye to follow the service of flying buttresses until it rests upon the pinnacled enrichments of the beautiful Lady Chapel.

II. Enter by the West door, stand at the end of the nave until the eye is accustomed to the soft, dim light. "Then, as in a moment, the unity and harmony of the church will make themselves felt, and the mind will see as well as the eye. It may not be all at once that the building will give up its secret and explain its own wonderful beauty, but the effect of the whole will certainly begin to tell upon every thoughtful observer."

III. Look down upon the whole of the choir and nave from an open pane in the great East window, to which access is gained by a winding staircase of some 80 steps. It is said that there is nothing in England more striking than the marvellous panorama of mediæval beauty shown from this point.

The Cathedral Close, with its palace and gardens, Deanery, Chapter house and Library, which give one now such a blessed sense of peace, have witnessed riot and massacre, and many of the most troublous scenes in the history of the West. To refer to them

would fill a volume, and the mind with pity; and I only mention the matter here to show that the people of this City were always ready to champion some cause more or less lost already. So fond were they of championing something that they would rather fight each other than not fight at all.

Whenever the Cornish marched as far as Exeter there was certain to be rebellion. The Cornish had a fiery eloquence which excited the slow-moving Saxon blood almost to frenzy. At one time they would have the mass, and at another time they would not have it; and almost every pretender to the throne, at one time or other, was pretty certain to find the "Ever Faithful" ready to take up his cause, and fight for him "down to the ground." They say the old spirit survives; and only wants mild encouragement on a 5th of November night, or during a contested election, to show itself.

I have said the "slow moving Saxon blood," but I only use the words "slow moving" by way of contrast with the fiery blood across the Tamar, which boils over and exhausts its heat long before Devon men begin to feel warm. When, however, the Devon blood is hot it retains its heat much longer than the Cornish. If a Devon man is your friend, or your foe, it is for life!

"Poor Tom D'Urfey," the song writer, was born somewhere in the City. His father was Huguenot, and set up looms for the manufacture of tapestry, wherein he was assisted by skilled workmen from the far-famed Gobelins, in Paris. I was told there is no trace of the factory now. Somehow, the exotic industry did not take root, but disappeared with the family. The church of St. Olave, in the Fore Street, was fitted up for the French refugees who took shelter here after St. Bartholomew's massacres, and for that reason many visit it.

There is a strain of the Huguenot blood in the City now which has never quite assimilated with the Devon. Though born in Exeter, no one would ever mistake Tom D'Urfey for a Devonian, but had he been born west of the Tamar he might have passed muster as a native. "Poor Tom!" how envied when the "Merrie Monarch" used to lean on his shoulder, and hum over a song with him! The songster's motto was "laugh and grow fat," and he lived to a good old age, but so poor, that the wits said he'd never want to come back again, even if he had the chance. There are song writers now who say that business has not improved much since then! Tom D'Urfey is neither read nor sung now, but he gave this adage to the language, "I can hold with the hare and run with the hound."

Close to the South door of the chancel of St. Sidwell's, lying flat on the ground, is the tombstone of Joanna Southcott, the Mrs. Eddy of her day. Sprung from the menial class, Joanna made much stir in the world through her "dreams and visions." She believed that she was chosen to become the Mother of Shiloh, the Prince of Peace. Scarcely able to read or write, she dictated visions and prophecies, and vague but shrewd allusions to home and foreign politics, some of which came true—as true as certain prognostications in the popular almanacs of the day.

She was a familiar figure in Exeter, earning a living in a very humble way, but was not considered worth squabbling over until she was threatened with persecution. Then the Exeter blood warmed a little. When the poor, deluded woman died, and Shiloh was not born of her, when her cause was utterly discredited and lost, then her followers increased in the "Ever Faithful" City. The belief spread that Joanna would one day re-appear and Shiloh be born, and Joanna Southcottians, if men, were under a vow never to use razors on their chins "until Shiloh came." It was the custom to shave in those days, so these men were called the "Bearded Men," and children ran away from them. Ladies belonging to the cult wore quaker bonnets.

In the three counties, Wiltshire, Somerset, and Devon, Joanna had numerous followers, and the last, John Pound, is said to have died in the faith twenty years after the prophetess, who departed this life in the year 1834. There is quite a Southcott literature. William Sharp, the eminent line engraver, member of the Imperial Academy of Vienna, and of the Royal Academy of Munich, believed in the woman and printed her books.

The poor soul was handled roughly by opponents, one of whom printed a pamphlet entitled: "The She-Fox caught from Cover; or the Prophetess in the Pillory." Another polite writer commenced his pamphlet by saying: "It is nearly twenty years ago that Joanna Southcott, a well known character in this City, began to forsake her usual habits of honest labour as an upholsterer, and to set up the iniquitous practice of foretelling future events by pretended nocturnal information from invisible agents."

Joanna believed that she would never die, and when she was dead she was reported to be in a trance which would last for ten days. Medical bulletins were issued daily, and England looked on, open-mouthed, and wondered. Was it possible that she should live again?

Thousands there are in the world to-day who would look with, at least, passing interest on this flat tombstone in St. Sidwell's

churchyard. There are even some, like Mark Twain, who would draw a parallel.

Henry Baird was a native of this City. He was a poet who wrote little, and published less. In life, he was a stubborn little man, quick to resent and forgive. In literature, he was "Nathan Hogg," and wrote in the Devonshire dialect before dialect poems were so much the vogue as now. "He was a Devonshire otter with a heart of gold," said one man who knew him. Another said he was the "Burns of Devon," and recited a few lines to show me how the dialect can touch soft places in the heart.

THE DAYSY TAP THA GRAVE.

Wat dist thow yer thow litt'l vlow'r,
  Why zich a spot dist crave?
This ez no pleace vur wan like thee—
  A daysy tap tha grave!
Aw, no! shud be zom murnvul vlow'r
  Vrim joyvul luk apart;
A vlow'r of darker hu, way haid
  Thit drap'th down like ma hart.
I can't abide to zee thee zmile,
  That zacrid grave abuv;
Uv hur U vrom ma beth till now,
  Wis aul I luv'd ur luv:
Et bear'th ma back to wat beant now,
  Bit aw! ta wat ith bin,
Then gie mee zom moar murnvul vlow'r,
  Like wat I veel wayin.
But stap! hur is a Angel now,
  Moar bright an pur thin thee;
A light brayk'th in apin mee hart,
  Thy buty now I zee;
Iss! litt'l vlow'r I'll iver think,
  As thow return'st aych yur,
Thit thow bee'st zent ta bare ta mee,
  A zmile av luv vrim hur."

Surely Exeter is not so rich in poets, dead or alive, that there is no room for a tablet somewhere for Henry Baird—"the otter with a heart of gold"—sleeping now far away from the red earth of Devon.*

* Baird's hatred of injustice was a consuming passion. Those who knew him well say they can read much of his true character in the following lines. He died in St. Thomas's Hospital, London, May 3rd, 1881.

GIRT OFVENDERS AN' ZMAL.

A muller ha vown a mowze in ez hutch
  An zed "vur this yu bee bown ta dye."
Bit tha pore litt'l crayt'r playdid hard,
  An wanted ta naw tha rayz'n wye.
"Tha rayz'n wye?" tha muller ha zed,
  "Way that's a purty thing, ta be zshore;
Now wadd'n thee vown in thic thare hutch,
  A aytin tha mayl thit's grownd vur tha pore?"
Then ha cort'n hole be tha end a tha tayl,
  An ez pore litt'l haid gin tha hutch ha hat,
Arter wich tha cruel twoad ha drade
  Ez pore litt'l carkiss owt ta tha cat.
Now a muller ha stayl'th an cal'th et "tole,"
  An a mowthvul ur tu, a mouze'll scral,
Wat a honjist vate thare ez, I zess,
  Vur ofvenders girt an ofvenders zmal.

The "Ever Faithful" is rich in churches. When the City was enclosed within walls the number was so remarkable that people had a homely way of saying a thing was "as true as God's in Ex'ter."

On the other side of the Tamar there were more "saints" but fewer churches—there were so many saints, indeed, that they were able to lend a few. The Devonians, being Danes and Saxons, and stubborn always, did not come under the spell of the Celtic saints quite so early as the Cornu-Britons; or, if they did, then the stories concerning them are not so well preserved, or so vivid and realistic. In the sister county, the "saints" are very human, and left traces of themselves everywhere in the shape of walking-sticks, head gear, quoits, platters, fishbowls, and all manner of things. In Devon, things are different, and the atmosphere is different, only the struggle with the old order of things is in evidence. Under whatever name, the Church has had a tough fight here, where, even to-day, clean-living, God-fearing people have faith in "charms" and incantations, and the witch-doctor does a good trade on market days.

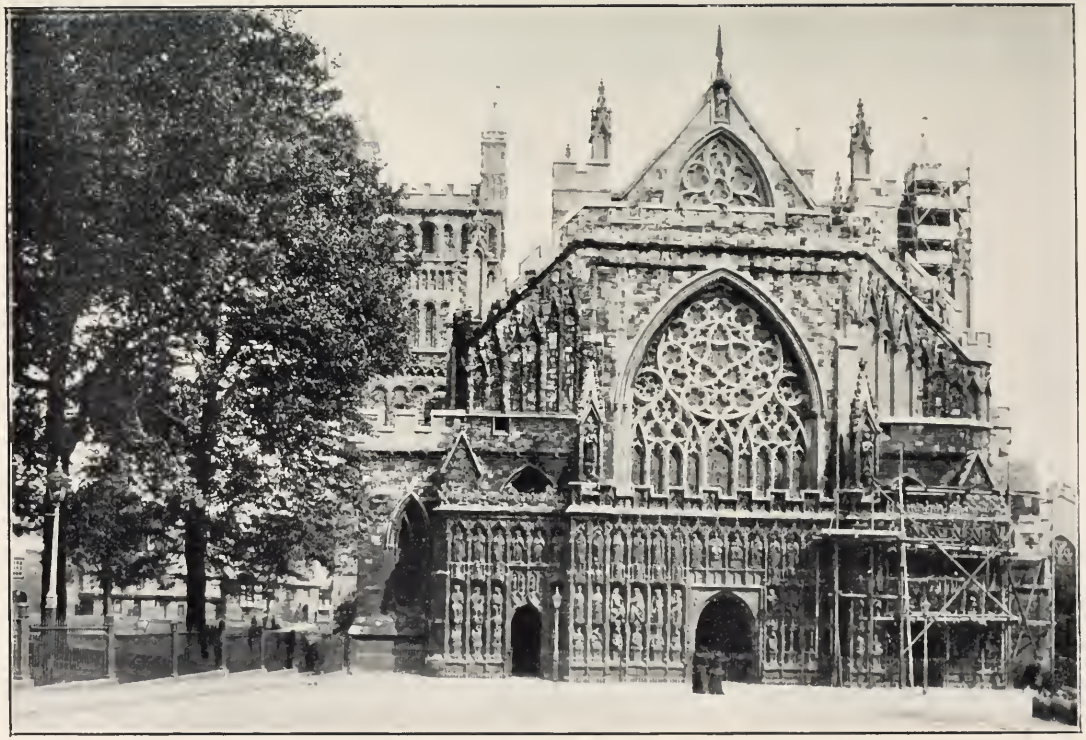
At one time the Church had to struggle against invisible forces in the shape of pixies. Stories are plentiful, and this is the spirit of some of them.

THE PIXIES AND THE BELLS.

A new bell was hung at Ottery St. Mary, which, everyone knows, was one of the favourite haunts of the pixies. It was even so when the great Coleridge, who was born there, wrote a pixie poem; and what it was "back along" in the days of Bishop Bronscombe, who dedicated the Church, must now be left to the imagination.

The pixies had been caught napping when the foundations of the Church were laid, and as they could make nothing out of the plans, which the architect spread out before him, the building was allowed to grow and grow—nave, choir, and lady chapel. At times they were interested—the fine foliage around the bosses took their fancy, only, they said amongst themselves that it was an awful waste of time to carve leaves inside when there were so many myriads to be seen upon the trees.

When the Church was dedicated, and hymns of praise floated upward on sweet incense, a tremor ran through pixie-land, for the pixies had a hold upon the people and represented something which this beautiful pile was erected to destroy.



"HAS LOOKED DOWN ON EIGHT CENTURIES."

Pixies disliked the sound of church bells, which were intended to drive away all evil spirits and pixies, as well as to call the faithful to worship; and when it was spread, far and wide, that the new bell of St. Mary's might be heard for twenty miles, over hill, and combe, and bog, to the great annoyance of all ancient pixie dwellers in the land, war was declared.

Now, it must be known that a church bell, to have the quality of sweetness essential to all worship, must be composed partly of tin.

The pixies were in league with the "nuggies," who work in the tin mines with silver hammers on silver anvils; and the nuggies said they would make no tin for church bells; but that they had no control over the metal when once brought to the surface.

But there must be tin for the bell.

So the good monks, and lay brethren round about, stepped into the rivulets and "streamed for tin," and got enough of the precious metal for the casting of the bell.

Then the pixies went in their myriads to the foundry, each with a drop of dew upon his wings, and shook the dew upon the metal, so that it cracked in the casting, nor could it be cast whole until after the building and all therein had been dedicated to St. Michael.

Then when the bell was cast so that it might praise God with its tongue, the pixies waylaid the men conveying it on huge rollers, and so deceived them by false landscapes that instead of going to Ottery they travelled towards the sea, and would have hurled the bell over a deep cliff had not Lay Brother John, by accident, just then run a thorn into his bare foot, which caused him to say "God bless us and save us!" Then the pixies fled, and the men's eyes were opened, and they saw that they had been "pixie-led" and well nigh come to terrible grief.

At last the bell was hung in the stately tower of St. Mary's. The great cross beams and heavy timbers bowed low to receive their burden and straightway raised themselves again, and the pixies heard the sound. Then they assembled once again in their hosts, and each one wove a gossamer thread, and flew to the tower, and wound it round the clapper of the bell.

The bell was to be baptised that very day.

The ringer when passing through the belfry seized the rope, just to try his strength once more, and to fill his soul with sweet sound. It was a new thing, and he wasn't yet tired.

He pulled, and then lay upon the rope with all his might. No sound!

"Dang my buttons! That's pixie work," said he.

So the Bishop and all the clergy came to baptise the bell, which was named Mary, and all the God-fearing parishioners came because they were to be godfathers and godmothers to the bell. Those who were not God-fearing came also, and mocked when they heard that the bell was tongue-tied and muffled by the pixies.

"'Tis a dumb bell," they said, and laughed merrily.

Then said the Bishop, "We will christen the bell, and it will speak by the power of the Spirit."

Now the godfathers all took hold of the rope, which the Bishop sprinkled, and then he ascended into the tower, the priests and acolytes following, and there sprinkled the bell, saying:—

"Mary, I baptise thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Be thou henceforth efficacious in driving thunder, lightning, evil spirits, pixies and tempests from the living and the dead in this place."

Now when the "gossips" lay upon the rope the bell spoke, for the pixie-spell was broken.

This story is only to be found in an ancient chronicle; but the pixies never lifted up their heads again in revolt in this parish, though you may find the "pixie parlour" and fairy rings here, as of yore, and may see wonderful things if your eyes are "touched" with the magic ointment.

The effigy of Sir John Coke descends from its pedestal and perambulates the church at night, but the pixies have nothing to do with this. Sir John was murdered by his own brother, and why he, and not the guilty brother, is troubled, is one of the mysteries.

Joanna Southcott, the prophetess, was baptised here; but she was evidently pixie-led most of her time.

There is a word to be said for Ottery, which seems to resist the temptation to grow—a pixie spell, perhaps. Thackeray spent part of his boyhood here. Ottery is the Clavering, the happy village, in "Pendennis."

Tom Smith, who used to drive the Alacrity coach, would often point to a tree near the river, from which a fine view of the church and town was commanded, and inform his companion on the box that "Artistes come and take hoff the church from that there tree." So says Mr. Thackeray.

Then there is *the* Coleridge; he was born in the Valley of the Otter. "The Ancient Mariner" is familiar the world over, and the name of Coleridge will never die as long as the melody of that

marvellous tale is heard. Still, it was not the sea but the river which filled his heart, and he often came back in thought to the Otter of his boyhood : "Thy waters with many tints," "Thy crossing planks," "Thy marge with willows gray," "Thy bedded sand that teemed with various dyes." Then that other Coleridge, "the silver tongued," who died Lord Chief Justice of England (making the second Lord Chief Justice which Devon has given birth to) was born here, and this is the home of my lord who still practises at the bar. There is something distinctive in the air here, and has been from the days of the young Carew who, giving trouble at the High School at Exeter, was led home to his father's house at Ottery, coupled between two fox-hounds. James Anthony Froude, himself a Devon man, tells the story.

CHAPTER XIII.

"DEVONIANS were well educated before education became popular, and this gave them a great advantage over the people of other counties, notably in the West," said a clergyman whom I met accidentally in the Cathedral Close.

In the Cathedral Close, or in the Cathedral, no one ever resents being spoken to—at all events, this is my experience.

"Grammar schools in Devon are old and numerous, and there are very few towns or parishes in which large sums were not given by pious donors for providing free education.

"There was the spirit of enterprise in a sea-faring and hardy population, who (whether they could read or not) were technically educated in seamanship, and were the best geographers of the age, and they were guided by men who had received a sound education in our grammar schools. This City was rich in grammar and free schools.

"Only take Tiverton—Blundell's school, which Blackmore has immortalised."

* * * * * * * *

The halo of a splendid reputation was once Tiverton's. The Prime Minister, the right honourable member for Tiverton, held the

destinies of the country in the hollow of his hand. No change was possible as long as "Old Pam" was alive. Tiverton gave him his seat for thirty years, and received the reflected glory.

A very good example this of a Devon town which owed its birth and growth to a river. At the junction of the Exe and Lowman there was a ford, commerce crystallised, and a town grew. It became a market town, and a cloth trade grew up. A very pleasant place to live in, in the midst of the lovely scenery of the valleys of the Exe and its tributary streams, and not so far from the bleak and barren Blackdown hills, whereon Nature seemed to take revenge for being soft and beautiful in the fruitful valleys.

There is another reputation, also with a halo, which spreads upwards and becomes richer with the centuries, and is also inseparable from the place—the reputation of Peter Blundell.

In some of the narrow streets one may fancy one sees the spare and active figure of a man going about his business—a man with high forehead, full hazel eyes, and mouth tender and sensitive. A thoughtful and reflective man attending to his business of cloth buying from the people who set up looms in their cottages and worked them there. Nothing very particular about the man, or his occupation, and we don't mark him down as different from other men who buy and sell, and make money, and put it out to interest, not knowing that he is working, and striving, and saving, for the realisation of a dream.

One night Peter dreamt that William of Wykeham appeared to him and said, "Though I am not myself a scholar, I will be the means of making more scholars than any scholar in England. Follow me!" William of Wykeham founded Winchester School, and Peter interpreted the words to mean, "Do you likewise at Tiverton." He was unmarried, and a dream-child entered into his life. He would build a school, and endow it, and found scholarships, and call them all by his name. When he died the dream-child was perfect upon paper—everything was planned and in order, and the money for which he had worked was ready to "build a faier schoolhouse to conteyne for the place for teaching only, in length one hundred foote, and in breadth fower and twenty foote," near the river Lowman, "and all to be enclosed with a fair, strong wall with a little dore." In the directions nothing was forgotten, so completely had he been possessed in life with this dream-child which one day was to live.

Peter was a shrewd man and practical, and made a "deare frende" of Sir John Popham, Lord Chief Justice of England, who

"THE OLD SCHOOL."

took the matter in hand at once, and built the school so well and truly after Peter Blundell's plans, that the worthy founder's spirit might have roamed therein as in a second home.

This is the Sir John Popham, "a huge, heavy, ugly man," whose portrait, in scarlet and ermine robes, hangs next to Peter Blundell's in the Big School, the man who obtained the charter of the London and Plymouth companies for the colonisation of Virginia and New England. A determined man to look at, "a terrible Puritan," but with a weather eye to business. When the Spanish Ambassador complained that his colonisation schemes encroached on Spanish territory, he said he was only undertaking the enterprise in order to clear England of thieves, *and get them drowned in the sea.* This was Peter Blundell's "deare frende," and he built the school, and founded the scholarships, and did all the things that the worthy old woollen merchant wished done, for the greater glory of God, and the good of the boys of Tiverton.*

No one passes through the town without seeing the converted remains (unhappy words) of the old school—you can't, the benevolent shade of Peter Blundell won't let you; and there's another shade now—once a Blundell boy in the flesh—who won't let you, and that is Richard Dodridge Blackmore, the creator of "Lorna Doone." Many old grammar schools throughout the land have been happy in their pupils, but none so happy as Blundell's in turning out one who, by his "insight and humour, and the rythmic roll of antique lore," would make it famous throughout all lands and generations.

The old school would not last for ever, but in the new building, whatever could be saved of panelling, and beams, and relics of the Spanish Armada has been preserved, and built in. The new may be better, but the old, alas! has passed away. The old school has been in the hands of commissioners and lawyers, and subjected to schemes of administration in order to bring it up to date and flourishing, as it is, with every promise of living a thousand years or so at the very least.

The old style of thing would not do for the present generation. A Blundell boy was "as hard as nails"; he had to be. Certainly he was expected to be an otter in his love of loach, minnows, and trout, and the water generally. The boys were always wet; when the river was in flood they waded through to church, and when it rose to a certain point they all had holiday, and went out and threw each other into the stream. They couldn't drown.

*Visitors from the United States are especially interested in Popham, and honour him at banquets as the man "under the shadow of whose great name was laid the colossal empire of the Western world."

Every new boy, according to the unrecorded chronicles of the school, underwent the water test and the fire test. He was stripped and thrown into the deepest part of Taunton Pool, and so got his first lesson in swimming. Then came the fire test. He was strapped sideways on a form, and placed with his back to the hall fire and "basted" from time to time with cold water. Those who survived were worthy of Blundell's. Unfortunately, on one occasion, the boys ran off to the Green without leaving anyone in charge, so the new boy was over-roasted, and died. Then this practice was given up!

One of the distinguished Blundellians was Bamfylde Moore Carew, the King of the Gypsies. The old spirit of audacity and unrest flickered up in this remarkable Devon lad, son of Theodore Carew, rector of Biskley, near here. He was well born, and educated in "a tender and pious manner" at Blundell's, according to Blundellian notions of "tenderness." He crammed a little Latin and Greek, but was best known for "a remarkable cheering halloo to the dogs." A child of Nature, he joined the gypsies, and on the death of Clause Patch, their King, he was elected King by popular vote, according to the rites, manners and customs of the ancient Egyptians. He was a most lovable man, and died "King." The gypsies at certain seasons of the year strewed flowers over a grave at Rew, where he was supposed to have been buried, sang a sacred hymn, and then bowed down and kissed the green turf. This is the only elected and crowned "King" that passed through Blundell's.

"Passen" Jack Russell was another specimen of a Blundell boy. He had a genius for hunting. When at school he kept ferrets, and hunted rabbits, and at sixteen he and Bob Bovey started a pack and went coursing. They must have been good fellows, those two, for the farmers took to them, and instead of laying complaints and horse-whipping them on occasion, used to send them secret messages telling them where a hare was sitting, or the carcase of an old horse for the dogs.

Poor Bob Bovey was expelled. Russell escaped by the skin of his teeth. He was called up, and this is the reported interview.

"You keep hounds, sir?"

"No, sir."

"Do you dare tell me a lie?"

"'Tis no lie, sir. Bovey stole them away yesterday, and sent them home to his father."

"Ah, that's lucky for you, or I would have expelled you, too," said the Headmaster.

The "Ironing Box" of the Old School is Blackmore's classic in "Lorna Doone." This triangular patch of green inside the gate was the old battlefield. This is where the Homeric fight between John Ridd and Robin Snell took place. Here also—a long time after—Frederick Temple had his first fight at Blundell's. His Grace told the story in his old age. Here it is.

"My antagonist was not a good boy, and, to tell the truth, he was a bit of a coward. He hit out at me, but I contrived to dodge him, and then my turn came. The end of it was that he turned tail and ran away, with me after him, shouting as he went 'Take him off, take him off.'"

We feel that something is wanting in this narrative, something of the joy of battle and of victory won upon the Ironing Box. Still, one must not expect too much from an Archbishop in praise of the "noble art," even when speaking of himself standing up against and licking a boy six inches taller.

But Dr. Temple was loyal to the old school. This is what he said to the boys at Canterbury—"It was my lot at school always to have to wash at the pump in the morning. All the boys washed at the pump. It was not, in some respects, as nice as washing in one's bedroom, but it had its merits, because if a boy was inclined not to wash himself the others washed him. I have before now helped to hold a fellow under the pump because *we* did not consider that he had washed enough!"

Cleanliness before godliness was the rule at the pump.

The Doctor was simply irresistible when he begged a holiday for the boys, as he did from Fulham Palace on the 19th June, 1887:

"My dear Headmaster,—

"I write in every capacity that can be assigned to me to get a favour from you.

"I want a holiday for the boys on the 21st.

"I entreat you as an Old Blundellian, as a Blundell scholar of Balliol; as a Blundell Fellow of Balliol; as a Governor of the School; surely the combined petition of so many, all of them Blundellians, ought to prevail.

"Do.

"Your humblest servant,

"F. London."

For three hundred years Old Blundell educated and turned out fine fellows, who washed at the pump, "hard as nails," and fit for the

battle of life. Long may the shade of Peter Blundell be satisfied with the New School, which is within easy distance of the Old.

The outdoor life is the life here—hunting, racing, shooting, fishing, golf and sports—a healthy, breezy tone everywhere.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE river runs through Exeter, and then onward until it meets the glorious sea. On one side of the estuary is gallant little Topsham—the ever-ready little Topsham when ships and men were wanted for commerce or for war.

A snug little spot this, with its church, and houses, and ship-builders' yards, and landing stages all dipping seawards—for the sea was its breath of life. Times have changed, truly, for the little port, but the old memories remain.

Then there is Exmouth, with its beaches of bright, soft sand, which has entered on a new life—a villa and a garden life, with rides, and drives, and links, and everything up to date. And here we are upon ground made classic by Sir Walter Raleigh, though, alas! the name, plentiful enough at one time, is only a tradition now. It is said there were once five families of Raleigh with a "Sir" at the head of each, which would have been a little confusing, only people had a knack of ear-marking one another by the colour of their hair, a halt in their walk, an impediment in their speech, or the name of an estate. Sir Walter Raleigh of Hayes—Hayes Barton, where he was born—would distinguish him from all others, if there were fifty Sir Walters in other parishes.

The Barton is a farmhouse now—a house with many gables and a porch—but the room in which he "first drew breath" is preserved.

The following is extracted from a scarce book of lithographic drawings of the Old School.

Mr. Peter Blundell, born Tiverton 1520, of parents in very humble station of life. By assiduity and integrity he amassed large fortune, and left £40,000 by will in legacies and bequests. Prince, in his "Worthies of Devon," says "he was a poor lad who went errands for the carriers who came to Tiverton. * * * By degrees he got a little money, of which he was very careful, and bought therewith a kersie, which a carrier was so kind as to carry for him to London gratis, and to make him the advantage of the return. Having done so for some time, he at length got kersies enough wherewith to load an horse, and went with them himself, where being found very diligent and industrious, he was received into good employment by those who managed there the kersie trade (for which Tiverton was then very famous) and he continued therein until he was rich enough to set up the calling for himself."

In addition to the school he provided

Two scholarships of £30 a year each at Balliol College, Oxford.

Two of £30 each at Sydney Sussex College, Cambridge.

Two Fellowships at each of the above-named colleges, and

Two Exhibitions of £30, tenable for four years, for boys educated at this School.

"WHERE RALEIGH WOOED MY LADY NICOTINE."

His father married first Joan Drake of Exmouth, and then Catherine Champernown, widow of Otho Gilbert and mother of the illustrious Sir Humphrey Gilbert, so he was a true son of Devon. The name has died out now.

Sir Walter was educated at Oxford, and had a fine capacity for the enjoyment of life. In solitude he was a poet, and escaped *ennui*; in prison a historian; in freedom a man of action, fighter, a speculator, a courtier, a statesman. He was far greater than the men who destroyed him. Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, knew it—knew that he was greater than himself, and than Cecil, whom he counselled by letter to ensnare in some embarkation against Spain because "it were good to cut down the thorne before the time come wherein it can make account to take hold of you." This is the kind of homage which great men receive from the men they overshadow.

Raleigh is only second to Drake in the heart of Devon; and it is as a sailor that he is best remembered. He felt the call of the sea in his blood before he went to Oxford. Sidmouth, Budleigh Salterton, Exmouth and Topsham were all within his reach in his boyhood. The tales which Amyas Leigh heard, he heard; and Millais came down here three centuries after and painted the youth listening to the tales of the old sea-dogs. There wasn't much change, perhaps, in the scene, only when Millais came there were some modern piles upon the beach, and the artist, in a moment of forgetfulness, painted them in!

Like Drake, Raleigh was a favourite with Queen Elizabeth, though for different reasons. She paid Drake the compliment of saying that he would not care if she thought ill of him; but Raleigh she favoured on account of his education and courtly manners, and she was a good judge of both.

Old Fuller preserves the story that young Raleigh laid his rich cloak on the mud for her majesty to walk on; and Dr. Drake hazards the conjecture that the act took place at Deptford, on the occasion of the knighting of Sir Francis Drake. There was a banquet on board the *Golden Hind*, and so great was the crowd that the wooden bridge leading to the ship broke down. This was the opportunity, and the gallant young Devonian, with the rich cloak upon his shoulders, had the mother wit to seize it.

One can imagine the scene. The foul slush of Deptford to be crossed by the proud lady wearing the highest and stiffest three-piled ruff in Europe, embroidered with pearls and precious stones. Strong and gallant men are there in plenty to carry her, if the problem were to be solved that way, but that were worse than the unqueenly lifting

up of satin skirts, and the fouling of dainty shoes and silken hose in the sight of the multitude. For virgin majesty the situation is embarrassing. Then comes Raleigh, young and handsome, glowing with inspiration, and lays down his rich cloak of Genoa velvet, padded and silk-lined, so that majesty may carry its three-piled ruff with dignity and grace over the foul mud. One glance of gratitude from the eyes of majesty, and Devon has a courtier whose fame will never die.

Sir Walter was a poet—a true poet, who could sing of love as well as any man of his time. His reply to Marlowe's "Come live with me" is exquisite.

"If all the world and love were young,
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move
To live with thee and be thy love."

There is a short poem of his in which contrast is made between the delights of courts in which "grief is forced to laugh against her will," and the "simple life," now so much talked of, in the country—his native Devon, probably, for choice—and he concludes with the invocation

"May pure contents
For ever pitch their tents
Upon these downs, these meads, these rocks, these mountains,
And peace still slumber by these purling fountains,
Which we may every year
Meet when we come a-fishing here."

Another undying romance in Sir Walter's life is his wooing of My Lady Nicotine. The first potato he planted in Ireland; the first pipe he smoked in Devon, but where? Legend is a tricky jade and has a fancy in this matter for Sir Humphrey Gilbert, saying it was he who smoked the first pipe in his pleasant grounds at Greenway, by the river Dart.

If we must elect, then we must vote for Raleigh—Raleigh lighting up his pipe under the shade of the flowering shrubs of Compton Castle. A very pleasant place, as we may know by going there, and sitting down, and lighting up, and then fancying what the gallant Sir Walter's feelings were when he first wooed My Lady Nicotine in this particular fashion!

Shade of Raleigh! Did your first smoke make you very——?

Here's to his shade, with blessings, for crumbling up a few withered leaves and then dropping a spark from his tinder box into his pipe bowl. Only one spark, and then the incense curls upwards, and in that incense, what dreams!

How one envies Sir Walter the first tobacco dream on European soil—the first delicate foretaste of all the joys to come to unborn millions.

To smoke a pipe at Compton Castle gives one an object in life. After all, travel is only a sort of pilgrimage to shrines.

Why not then, brother smokers, devotees to the weed, make this a shrine, and come in countless thousands, and light up, and dream?

CHAPTER XV.

DAWLISH is only a short run from the City; and if the tide is out one may catch sight of men, women, and children moving about like animated bundles of old clothes, picking up humble cockles. The long flats, half sand, half ooze, are the home of shell-fish, and seen for the first time, one wants to sit down and sketch. The groupings of bare-legged men and women (mostly old) not got up for the occasion are strikingly unconventional. This is not supposed to be a very money-making business, and, as far as one may judge, groundsel gathering, watercress picking, and cockle hunting are professions not yet overcrowded.

Pass Powderham Castle, the home of the Earls of Devon, with its well-timbered deer park, pass Starcross with its swan boat, and you are at Dawlish—the pretty, dainty, coquettish. I always fancy that there is something essentially and exclusively feminine about Dawlish, wherein it differs from Teignmouth, which has a touch of commerce about it, and is older and more virile.

The place has increased its boundaries a little since Barham wrote of it in the Ingoldsby Legends as "half village, half town"; but it seems never to have grown up, never to have passed that adorable age when blue eyes shine brightest, and it is still permissible to run upon the sands and paddle. And how can it grow up and look like other towns with its perennial brook babbling through green pastures to the unwrinkled sea? There are towns—plenty of them—with which one never seems to associate anything truly feminine; but this is not one of them.

Dawlish has kept up its appearance of youth without having been spoilt. I don't know who discovered the place, or whether it discovered itself, like the foam goddess, to all who had eyes to see. It

really is not of much consequence to find an answer, because whoever comes here for the first time thinks he has made a discovery, which probably he has—for himself.

There are few places which have been so petted and caressed, and toasted, and sung about for fifty years. How many times has it been sketched and painted—and by the best artists, too? Here is Dawlish to-day with its glorious sea front, admired and raved about as of old, and still select without being exclusive. This is a secret which some towns, like some people, possess, and the secret is their own.

The maker of modern Dawlish was a Mr. John Edye Manning, who, having the heart of a child and the soul of an artist, allowed the tiny brook to ripple along. The brook was named the Daw, and he let it sing on at its own sweet will, and made a "Lawn" for it to warble through for ever. Sometimes the right man is in the right place, at the right time.

One charm about the place is its restfulness. The idea of "home" is everywhere. You look at the hotels and villas and the word "family" is writ large. People come here to lounge and wear comfortable costumes without any pretention to conventional requirements. As I have said, Dawlish is still in that stage of adorable youth when you want to kiss and be friends always.

One of Brunel's scientific playgrounds was here. The great engineer made an atmospheric railway in the forties. There were houses along the sea front wherein the driving power was generated, and they remained long after the experiment was abandoned. The practical difficulty was to stop the train in the right place after it was once induced to start. Old people tell some funny stories about the atmospheric railway.

Poor Keats ought to have sojourned here instead of at Teignmouth, which, somehow, irritated him. There was too much traffic and movement passing the comfortable-looking old house in the Strand, with its circular windows and balconies. The house still exists. "Isabella," a tale from Boccaccio, was written here. Still the poet was not happy. He was too near the river, which would send up its mists, and so he slanged the place and the climate. First class poets want everything their own way!

Poor Keats saw things at Teignmouth in false perspective. He wrote: "You may say what you will of Devonshire, but the truth is it is a splashy, rainy, misty, snowy, foggy, haily, floody, muddy, slipshod county. The hills are very beautiful—when you get a sight of

"ITS PERENNIAL BROOK BABBLING THROUGH GREEN PASTURES."

'em. The primroses are out, but then you, perforce, are in; the cliffs are of a fine deep colour, but then the clouds are constantly vieing with them. I fancy the air to be of a deteriorating quality."

Dawlish was the place for him, and then the thing-of-beauty-joy-for-ever mood would have been upon him when he wrote to his friends.

I don't know whether any other first-class poet has written in the same strain. Shelley lived in a cottage at Lynmouth,* and his soul was filled with the beauty of cloud and sea, sensitive plants, and sky-larks. So it was not the climate which was really at fault in Keats's case, and he has long ago been forgiven.

CURL PAPER STORIES.

Modern Dawlish has no legends of its own, but has inherited one relating to three rocks which formerly stood out boldly and shapely on the beach, Teignmouth way, and were called the Parson, the Clerk, and the Pulpit. They have been sadly weathered away by time. The rocks, however, were phenomenal, and legend stepped in.

There are several versions, and I give two.

Number One.

A parson and his clerk, who happened to be unpopular at the time, were riding from Teignmouth to Dawlish one dark, tempestuous night, when the parson exclaimed—

"I wish the Devil would put us into the short road to Dawlish!"

No sooner said than a sturdy countryman appears from behind the hedge, saying, "I be a-goin' to Dawlish myself, and shall be glad of your honour's company, for I think us'll have a wild night of it, and those fellows from Deadman's Lane will be out, besides the spirits and pixies."

So the three journeyed together until they came to the edge of the cliff, when the countryman showed himself in his true colours—horns, hoofs and tail—delivered a scathing homily to both Parson and clerk, whipped the elements into storm, with thunder and lightning accompaniments, caused a landslip and precipitated both into the sea, where they became petrified. The pulpit is not accounted for.

Number Two.

This is more elaborate, and seems to have been directed against an ambitious priest, a profane hypocrite, who was anxious for his

*Quite recently disappeared.

dying bishop to die quickly in order to step into his shoes. Returning from Exeter, where he had been to inquire as to his diocesan's health, priest and clerk lost themselves on Haldon, whereupon the priest cursed his man roundly, saying, "I would rather have the Devil for a guide than you."

A countryman on horseback appears, and conducts the party to a lonely house, wherein there is music and dancing and much revelry, and sir priest and clerk are made welcome. A fearful storm breaks over Haldon, and in the midst of it all news is brought that the dying Bishop of Exeter is dead.

The priest and his clerk mount their horses. They must return to Exeter. The question of succession is all-important.

The terrified cattle will not move in the pitiless storm.

"The devil is in the horses, but they shall go," says the priest, spurring and whipping mercilessly.

Then he took an oath at which fiends tremble—the lights disappear, the earth shakes, and in the morning light both parson and clerk are found turned into red sandstone upon the beach, where what is left of them may be seen to this day.

In country legends the devil is generally made to score off the parson, who, even in social stories, is made to figure badly. A farmer who was not on good terms with his vicar paid him out at the tithe dinner, and then told the story to his friends.

"I was sitting by the side of Farmer Dobson, and I said to en, in the hearing of the passen, 'Bob, I had a turrible dream last night.' 'Had'ee, though?' 'Ess, I had.' 'What was't about then?' 'I'll tell ee! I dreamed I was daid, and that I descended into——.' 'Not there, surely.' 'Ess, by George! and I found Mr. Divil uncommonly perlite. He showed me all about the place, and I began to feel tired. At last I spied a butival easy chair in a cosy corner, and I told his majesty I should like to sit down in it and rest myself. His majesty said, 'You musn't sit there long, because that chair is specially intended for a *very particular friend of mine*.' I ventured to ask who his particular friend might be. And who do you think it was, Bob?"

"Don't knaw."

"Why Passen——."

"My eyes, you shud hav zeed how the passen looked at me. But I didn't care."

The farmer called this "taking it out of the passen for his impidence."

CHAPTER XVI.

TO be good looking you should be born at Teignmouth, for good looks is the fairy gift of the nymph of the placid Teign. The gift is an ancient one now, and has been handed down with more or less of success. How far the gift is limited to the old Devon blood is matter for dispute, but a visitor need know nothing about disputes.

They say the Danes founded this place, and families of gentle birth have always lived here or hereabouts. Certainly there is a county look about the houses and shops; and a certain distinction about the professional men, who are nearly related to the county families. Teignmouth has been adopted by many strangers, and it is said that one may live a long time, die, perhaps, in the place, without ever being permitted to penetrate the inner circle, which has an atmosphere all its own.

The girls of South Devon are certainly pretty—blue eyes, and light hair, and complexions like "apple blow." Nowhere, perhaps, is skin so deliciously, refreshingly white—so cooling to look at, so soft. To see a young girl with arms and neck bare is to learn how divinely white and beautiful they may be. The girls don't run tall, but are *petite* and lissom and "cuddlesome," and can wear almost any colour and look well in it.

The young men have their beauty also, and their freckles are condoned on account of the fine texture of their skin, light blue eyes, and light hair, with beards to match. Sometimes a splendid model of young manhood is discovered in a ferry boat; and there have been romances on the water between the old town and Shaldon. Old portraits show that the people of Devon "belong" to be fair, just the same as their Cornish cousins "belong" to be dark; only, they say, a change is taking place, which the curious may note if they care to run through the elementary day schools.

Let the future take care of itself—to-day the population is not to be denied its claim to good looks, and if denied the claim will be made all the same!

Teignmouth is also proud of its history; it has had the honour of being burnt and sacked by pirates and by Frenchmen; and yet this

was the best of all possible happenings, for each time it rose from its ashes finer and fairer, and actually made money over the disasters, so, out of gratitude, a street was built and named "French Street"—one of the rare monuments of gratitude to adversaries in the world. Teignmouthians are also very well satisfied with their belongings—their Den, their beach, their links and polo, their bridge, clubs, reading rooms and scientific and other institutions. There *may* be better, of course, but one needn't say so—not on the spot.

Then they enjoy breezes from the sea, and airs from the moor; and, when they wish for it, there is the reposeful valley of the Teign, and no true man or woman will allow that these can be surpassed.

Then there is the social side—assemblies, and hunt balls, and Yeomanry weeks, with races, and concerts, and dramatic performances. The theatre is no new thing. Edmund Kean played here in the old days. He tramped from Exeter, and there is the story of the week he spent here just before making his *debut* at Drury Lane. A lady is the writer, and she wrote:

"We all went and saw him (Kean) first perform a kind of ballet with his little boy, a little cherub of between three and four, then act *Shylock* in a manner truly surprising; lastly go through a pantomime with a most active Harlequin, and for doing this, or nearly the same, for *four* nights, he received *seven* pounds for the whole, benefit included."

Mrs. Kean's observations the next morning to the lady, who called on her, were forceful. She said: "Oh! ma'am, my husband came home last night fatigued to death, and all to make such a fool of himself—he who can act so well, and he says he hates to play to a country audience, *and all for seven pounds!*"

The town has its commercial side—it always had, and its ships traded far and near. When smuggling was profitable Teignmouth took it up as a business, and worked at it without sentiment. It was nothing new for Devon men to be "free traders" on the water, and when they had to abandon privateering they stuck to smuggling. The skipper was often "financed," and he had with him on board his little craft men in whom the spirit of daring adventure was as alive as in the days of old. That very innocent-looking place, Combe Cellars, where the ferry is, was at one time a great receiving place for smuggled goods. The ferry was owned by a young girl of powerful frame, who was the life and soul of the traffic. To and fro, to and fro, on dark nights she used to ply, conveying kegs of spirits and packages of tobacco, delivering them over to "honest traders," who rode off quickly. And

"THERE HAS BEEN ROMANCES ON THIS WATER."

then there were places on the coast where the skipper would land his cargo, and men with horses, manes and tails cut close and well greased with soft soap, would ride off through narrow lanes upon the cliffs and discharge their burdens in secret caves. It was dangerous for Custom House officers to interfere at such times, even if they got on the right track, for the men would fight desperately, and there was no seizing horses without manes and tails, and with coats slippery with soft soap. There is a "Smuggler's Lane" at the end of the sea wall, leading to the Dawlish road, which those who wish may follow, and imagine the rest!

Sometimes captures were made of sunken kegs which broke adrift and floated on the sea, and old men with tears in their eyes tell of piles of tobacco smoking on the beach, and of good spirits poured into the sea which intoxicated the fish swimming aimlessly around. It was too pathetic to witness such sad waste of good stuff.

There was colour in the hard and hazardous life; and not a gentleman of Devon in the old days but would shut his eyes and know nothing, should he, by any chance, come across the men running a consignment of contraband. A Fortescue, in holy orders, too, speaking of the days of his youth, said to a brother clergyman—"Poor fellows, they had a rough time of it. It was a nuisance, certainly, when they took one's carriage horses from the stables for a midnight run, but then, you see, they always left a keg of something good in the stable straw in return for the liberty they had taken."

Teignmouth has its season, and a good one—"Some people come with the sparagras, more with the green peas, but with the French beans we'm busy," is a waiter's very practical reply to the question, "When does your season really commence?"

I have mentioned Combe Cellars, formerly a den of smugglers. It is all altered now: it is to-day a little paradise whereon you land after fishing, and banquet on cockles and cream teas. What would you have simpler or more delicious?

THE LADY OF THE MIST.

Sea mists are wonderful things, rising no one knows why, and then disappearing without any apparent cause. There is something ghostly at times about the shapes which rise from the sea and float up between the rocks, and then outwards, and are lost to view.

Thorncombe Farm has a good deal of cliff land which is not much good except for rabbits, hiding away amongst the bracken, and for sheep who crop the sweet, short grass, and stare at the ships

sailing up and down. On the cliff is the Devil's fog-horn, a deep and narrow blow-hole, so called because at times the wind rushes up and makes a dismal noise, which is notice of change of weather, of mist, and storm, and what not. The sheep know the sign and keep closer together, and their timid eyes have a scared look in them. On the beach a basin of rocks forms a trap for things cast up by the sea, and stories are told of many curious and costly things picked up on this spot after bad weather in the Channel.

The story of the sea-wraith is told to children between the lights, and the legend has been kept alive because people declared they saw a beautiful lady floating on the sea in times of mist, and known as the Lady of the Mist. It was unlucky for any person with friends at sea to see this sight, and when they did, they turned pale, and said a prayer.

The story goes that, once upon a time, men from the farm found the body of a woman floating in this basin of rock, and she was wonderful to look upon, being fair as any lily, with rings upon her fingers, and splendid jewels on her arms. The cliff men took the jewels, but were not compassionate, and threw the body back into the water. As it drifted away, the long golden hair spreading like a glory on the dark blue sea, the pale face looked reproachfully upon the men who had taken payment and refused the right of Christian burial.

The shepherd boy minding the sheep upon the cliff saw what was done. He was not very "wise," but he had compassion, and marked the place where the body drifted. Then he buried it on the sheltered side of a great rock.

The shepherd who was not very "wise," was called Tom Cobley, and he was a dreamer and saw visions in which the lady appeared to him, dressed in jewels and beautiful garments, and said she would not rest until she had Christian burial. The men of the farm laughed at him, for he was not very "wise."

This was long ago, and when mists were on the coast fishermen sometimes saw the lady rise from the sea, and they told tales of having followed until it vanished, and of having heard sweet music in the air. When disaster and loss of life followed, people said they were suffering for the wickedness of former years, and that the spirit should be laid to rest.

Now, there came to live upon the farm one Samuel Tresize, a Cornishman, whose head was full of stories, and who had the gift of second sight, he being the seventh child of a seventh child. He heard this story, and it was nothing wonderful to him, coming as he

did from a land where every sight and sound and thing unusual is the work of pixies, or saints, or powers of darkness. When the Lady of the Mist rose again he followed, and marked the place of disappearance, at the foot of the great rock; and the next day he came with pick and shovel, and then buried what he found in the consecrated ground of the little church on the high cliff, which is a mark to all mariners at sea.

Mists come and go, and you may imagine what you please at times, for the air currents roll up the vapour into fantastic shapes, and when disaster follows, old people still say that the Lady of the Mist has been seen again.

CHAPTER XVII.

A DELICIOUS sail from Teignmouth to Brixham. Across Babbacombe Bay, across Torbay, Torquay crowning the heights and commanding homage, which should be paid in full dress fashion.

Torbay is of horseshoe formation, with Torquay on the north and Brixham on the south side. The places differ as widely as the poles.

Brixham is the home of fishermen. It always has been, and has known but little of any other life than fish. Trawlers predominate now.

There are three things to be looked at—men, boats, and fish. There is also a historical stone bearing the legend that William of Orange first set his foot on English soil on this spot; and a cave, just outside the town, where bears and hyænas feasted, and, in turn, gave up the ghost.

The town itself is own brother to a Cornish fishing town, only larger than most.

The first houses were built close to the water, and then they rose upwards as the cliffs rose, their windows opening always towards the harbour, so that a man may hail a brother fisherman, or see that his craft is riding safely to her moorings. There is the same economy of space, and thriftiness about light and air which seem common to fishermen all the world over. They are so exposed to sunshine and

wind that when once at home they like to be "snug," and they like all around them to be "snug" also; and they also like to be able to whip in and out of their cellars, stow away gear and ballast and things with the least possible trouble. On land, a fisherman hates much walking. When he lands he likes to kick off his big boots and "turn in," and when he "turns out" he likes to be able to roll on to the quay, and into his boat, with the least possible amount of walking. So the houses always hug the shore, and then rise as the cliffs rise, and streets come anyhow — narrow winding passages, and steps are plentiful.

Brixham is the home of the Devon trawler and drifter as you see him on the quay, standing out sharply and well defined, lord of the sea and the fishes therein, and calling no man master on board the craft of which he is skipper.

Every man looks kingly in this circle of sea kings, as he gazes around, indifferent to all things besides trawls and gear, boats and sails, and the still panting harvest of the sea ready for market.

Our Brixham fisherman is not a modern product—not he. See him once standing here; or better still, see him on board his boat, tiller in hand, with one eye on the clouds, and the other on his sails. That sou'wester, with rim curled back, so as to look like a helmet, suits him, giving him just that touch of the Norse viking which you know is in the blood, but which you want this headpiece to remind you of. He is a splendid picture, as picture; he is a splendid man, as man, the growth of centuries, and not to be manufactured to order, for the sea produced him and nursed him upon storms.

There is a legend in the West that one must be mystically born on wet sea moss in the Cave of Winds to know intuitively why the ocean dimples and to hear the storm from afar; and the gift passes on and on, generation after generation, as a law of life. Dwellers on the coast know it is so, and say "the salt is in the blood," and turn morning, noon, and night towards the sea. Those who sail in and out in their little craft never tire of watching the surface of the sea and sniffing in its perfume; and they are real Bluewater men, a special product of Nature.

The type may be seen here, and in the smaller coves and villages on the coast wherein families have lived, generation after generation, from long before historic chronicle. It is even in the coves better than here, where modern life will make itself sometimes felt, that the Bluewater man is best studied, for, as a rule, he resists change, and likes to see old boats rotting peacefully in the sun, nets drying in the

"THE HOME OF FISHERMEN."

wind, and to smell the boiling bark and cutch and tar wherewith he tans his nets and sails.

Our fisherfolk like to have the evidences of their calling around them—a trace here, a trace there—a long seat in the eye of the sun on which to rest and talk of boats and sailing, fish and fishing, and keep one eye upon the sea and the other upon silver gulls everywhere. Then they are governed not so much by clocks as by tides. Boats are aground or afloat according to the state of the tide, and the men wake up when it is half tide or so—time to go a-fishing.

When you see them walking on the quays, kicking baskets and boxes and stray things out of the way with their thick boots, you know them for an independent race, in whom the spirit of freedom dwells.

"When a young man puts his foot on board a boat he's good for nothing else," said an old man whose time was past, but who was watching the boats sail away.

"It is a hard life, but then that's what we were brought up to, and it's healthy. What I say is this: a boy who goes fishing and trawling is no good afterwards for land occupations. He must have his freedom, and he can't get that in trades and offices."

Young men who can be spared do well as yachtsmen during the season. You may pick them out on board the racing craft in the Royal Yacht Squadrons, clear-eyed and alert, ready at a moment's notice, obeying the skipper's eye before the word is uttered, so perfect is their knowledge of the thing to do and the moment for doing it. You may pick them out on board the racing craft in Torbay, sea bronzed, and the glow of inspiration on their faces, watching sea and sky, and holding silent communion with elemental forces whose secrets are theirs by long inheritance. When the season is over they return, and go trawling and fishing again.

A fishing town always has its own particular perfume. It agrees with the natives well enough, and visitors are not bound to like it—not to like it at Brixham any more than they like the distinctive perfumes of Cologne.

I don't know how it is, but people having to do with fish are rough in manner, and given to the use of strong language. Our fishermen are brusque, and elbow you out of their way, or walk over you, if you prefer it, and they are not gentle-tongued towards one another when their interests clash. And the women who hawk fish are seldom seen at prayer meetings. There is something in the business!

In olden time the Brixham people were said to have been musical, and to have had sweet voices. When you hear men shouting to one another, if there is a chance of a foul, the idea of musical sweetness does not come uppermost. Dartmouth is quite close, but boatmen on the quays there do not talk the sweet Devonshire dialect as though they were rubbing down their words with a file. If you want to know why this is, you are told that the Dartmouth men have a soft job, and little to do now but wrap themselves up in cotton wool and lavender. Let them come out trawling, year in year out, and then see!

The landing of William, Prince of Orange, in search of a throne is one thing you are not allowed to forget. He did land here. The stone marking the exact spot is railed in; the Prince's statue is near by. When he came the people round about walked miles to see the glorious sight, and, in order to feed the army, brought apples in their pockets, and sent them rolling down the cliff and into the mouths of the hungry Dutchmen.

Lord Macaulay came here and drew inspiration from the very spot, and then followed the march of the victorious Prince as far as Newton Abbot, where proclamation was made under the shadow of the one venerable tower of the place. The Brixham and Newton people should have had a Tulip day in commemoration of the great event, and then a Macaulay day; but imagination has been wanting here; Brixham is content with fish, and Newton with the good things brought by the Great Western.

Brixham, when not talking loud and using fish language, is still Protestant with a big P. Hurrah!

A BLUEWATER MAN.

I met him first at the Lifeboat house, and gave him "good morning."

Then I saw him on the quay with one finger through the gills of a fish. A spare man with white beard, wearing jauntily a cap with peak to it on his head. A well set up man who, but for a certain stiffness in his joints, might have looked young seen from behind. This was Sam Emers, eighty years of age, pensioner. To be a pensioner is to be respectable, and a bit envied in a fishing town.

"No, I can't say I thought the pay good in the Service, but I am making up for it now," said he in the course of a friendly chat at the hotel in the evening.

"If I manage to live until I'm a hundred, the country will have paid me altogether very well for my services."

He was a Bluewater man of the Devon breed, descended from men who had always been either fishing at home, or privateering, or spending their time as prisoners of war in France. He seemed to have a most intimate knowledge of prison life in France a century ago, when English sailors in plenty were shut up in the Ardennes, after marching bare-footed and nearly naked hundreds of miles from Dieppe. And then the rations! One pound of brown bread, sometimes, per day, and bad at that. The old boys didn't like the food when they got it; didn't like the "parleyvoo;" didn't like the climate; didn't like the people; and, above all, hated being shut up in a land where there was no sea, no swish-swash of the eternal sea to remind them of dear old Devon!

His grandfather died in the French prison at Givet, and his father was "pardoned" by the great Napoleon after spending seven whole years there, breaking his heart all the time for the sight of blue water. His mind was well stored with family history, and about himself he had as many adventures by sea and land to tell as would fill a volume. Some of his personal stories were crisp.

One day he fell overboard.

The boatswain piped "man overboard," and he was picked up and marched aft.

"What's the offence?" asked the acting lieutenant.

"Absent from duty without leave, sir," replied the boatswain, saluting.

"Give him three dozen—next time," said the officer, turning on his heel.

"My heart was in my mouth when he said 'three dozen,' but the reprieve came quickly, and I knew it was his little joke. If it hadn't been his joke I should have had the three dozen right enough—no one would have interfered."

Then he was drafted into the Coastguard Service, and was stationed in exposed places, where sea tragedies followed every storm. To look on and do nothing! To watch man after man drop out of the rigging into the waves, and then to pick them up, all bruised and battered and shapeless when the tide went out, was, he said, supremely awful. Sometimes he woke at nights with death shrieks ringing in his ears, and the seabird's cry brought back living pictures of what he had witnessed at Northam, Clovelly, and Westward Ho!

And this calm, beautiful Torbay, he had seen it strewn with wreck—every cove and beach covered with spars and timbers, and gallant ships thrown up high and dry, and this Brixham harbour filled with timber splintered to matchwood.

Then something switched off his recollections into a gayer vein, and he told stories of Jack afloat and ashore, with fiddle and lass; of frolic and punishment in all climates, from the tropics to the poles.

Jack ashore, so he said, would face old Nick himself for a guinea and a bottle of rum. In the old days rum was second nature and got men into tight places, and out of them too. He told a story of Bo'sun Stokes, his maternal grandfather, as follows:—

"My mother's father was a 'tarry-breeks' and rose to be boatswain, and after the Peninsula war he was discharged. He had a fine record for desperate deeds, and when he had his grog aboard he let no man forget how he had served his King and country—not he!

"Parson John Wallis was a bit of a wag, and when he heard my grandfather going it 'all taut ropes,' he challenged him to go to the bone house at midnight and bring away a human skull which the sexton had that day deposited there.

"My grandfather said afterwards that the proposal fairly 'knocked the wind out of his sails,' but the offer was made publicly, and he had a reputation.

"'Done,' said he, 'get your guinea and the rum!'

"When the clock struck twelve my grandfather went alone to the bone house, and began to fumble about in the dark. At last he came across something round, and was carrying it off, secretly glad to get away, when a hollow voice said:

"'That is mine.'

"'Take it, old cockalorum,' said my grandfather, tossing it gently in the direction of the voice.

"Then he rummaged about and came across a second skull, and picked that up and started for the door.

"'That is mine,' repeated the voice.

"'And that's a lie,' said my grandfather, 'for no man was ever born with two skulls in this parish.'

"Grandfather's blood was up. He smelt a trick, and he went round and round until he gripped a man in hiding, and dragged him into the open. This was the sexton whom the vicar had sent there to scare the old sea dog, and my grandfather gave him the 'seaman's fives' in the churchyard, until he screeched. Then Parson John came on the scene, who walked both off to the vicarage, and they all had

"QUEEN IN HER OWN RIGHT."

hot grog in the kitchen, and my grandfather received his promised reward. The parson was a trump.

"After that no one doubted my grandfather's courage; and people used to say of any desperate man, 'He'll face the devil, like Bo'sun Stokes.'"

The old man was a bit flushed, and his face beamed. He had an audience, and felt his hour of triumph.

"If you had your time to go over again, what occupation would you choose?" I asked.

"I would follow the sea," he replied, after a moment's reflection. And he looked as though he meant it.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TORBAY was discovered by the ancient cave men who resided on the north and the south sides of the bay during the era of the extinct animals.

The cave men lived very near where Brixham and Torquay now are, which shows that at that early period man's instincts directed him towards the best spots. Torbay, they say, is the only place on the coast where ancient cave men left traces of habitation, and so it is supposed that these caves were sanitoria, frequented by the ladies and gentlemen of the period who were "touched on the chest," and wanted the blessings of open-air treatment in the loveliest of climates.

Preference seems to have been given to the Torquay side, here again showing the admirable judgment of our ancient ancestors, and knowledge as to what was necessary for the cure of consumption and pulmonary complaints. Torquay is screened by lofty hills on the north, east and west, and is open to the sunshine and sea breezes of the south, and here, at Anstey's Cove, patients could sit at the mouth of the cave dwelling and suck in life with the sunshine and warm airs, while they chipped flints, and split marrow bones for broth. The medical gentlemen of the era most probably recommended the open-air treatment at Torbay, just as moderns do, and for the same reasons.

There are two caves, but the Brixham was probably not so secure as the Torquay establishment, as the bears and hyænas turned the dwellers out at last and took permanent possession. At the Torquay

cave civilisation was somewhat advanced. Relatives from the moors, when they paid visits left behind them visiting cards in the shape of beads, which have been very carefully collected, and may be seen now at the Museum at Torquay. The carrying of beads, made of stone showing the district from which the visitors came, pre-supposes the wearing of clothes with pockets, but as there is nothing in the collection suggestive of hats, of course it is quite possible that they were not in fashion just then, or were discarded during the open-air health treatment.

The eyes of scientific Europe were, a few years ago, keenly directed towards these limestone caves in Torbay—on the Torquay, or Kent's cavern, especially. There was an old story current that the cavern was haunted, as it very probably was by smugglers, who were always very anxious for people to avoid the out-of-the-way places wherein they secreted their smuggled goods. It was circulated, and at one time believed, that the spirit of Sir Edward Kent, an ancient knight, haunted the cave, and was to be seen at midnight praying over the huge block of limestone which, in falling, had crushed his beautiful and only daughter. His was the ancient ghost.

The modern ghost was a scientific one, and took the form of William Pengelly, geologist, who haunted the cave for years, and sifted every grain of sand, and particle of black earth and fine dust in order to discover the secrets of the ancient dwellers. This scientific ghost had a merry twinkle in his blue eye, and was to be seen daily, carrying away the spoils of the cave under an Inverness cape. Pengelly's soft bowler hat, jack boots, and cape were familiar in the streets of Torquay—always taking the same walk, namely, from his house to Anstey's Cove, and back again. It used to be said pleasantly that his boots knew the way to the cave.

It was a solemn undertaking. The great British Association was at its back; the reputation, existence even, of the cave man undergoing the open-air treatment in sunny Torbay was at stake. For years, every man of science made a pilgrimage to the cave, and felt supremely happy, and made an entry in his diary, if a bone, or a chipped flint, or a spindle-whorl were discovered in his presence. The stalagmite preserved secrets so well that the ancient bone needles of the fair sex were brought to light. A human skull discovered here just then would have electrified the world.

There is something romantic in the attraction which this old cave had for the scientific during the period of its excavation, which swallowed up two thousand pounds in hard cash. The people who took

the least interest in the whole business lived on the spot, and local indifference sometimes affected the buoyant spirits of the explorer; but he happened to be a Cornishman, with a Cornishman's almost inexhaustible store of hope in to-morrow.

The results of his labours are to be seen at the Natural History Museum.

* * * * * *

Torquay overlooks Torbay, and is a queen in her own right.

Seen for the first time you say, "This is Paradise."

M. de Chatelaine compared it with Naples in an exquisite sonnet —Naples the brunette in the Mediterranean; Torquay the blonde in Torbay; both adorable though so different.

Seen from a distance, the idea occurs that the fairies planned and built the place, with villas and gardens in the heavens, so as to be away from noise and dust, sorrow and care, torture and pain; and that they then took compassion on humanity and gave it to them as an inheritance.

Torquay can't be said to have a trade—it has sunshine, and climate, and beauty, the three things we look for in fairy haunts. Perhaps we might say this was the first of the seaside towns in the West to learn the secret of living on beauty. The good fairies must have made the suggestion when they were in a pitying mood, and then the doctors said "Torquay and rest!" "Torquay and sunshine!" "Torquay and health!" The railway did the rest.

Originally this was a fishing cove, and supplied soles and table fish to the Abbey, and the few gentry round about. It can hardly be said to have had a history, for when it ceased to be a fishing cove it became a *place de luxe*, with the air of wealth and social refinement about its carriages and liveries, and the high-sounding titles of illustrious families who came here to breathe freely, and to live in the open through winter frosts—if they dare come—like flowering palms, magnolias and camellias. So Torquay grew without a "trade" in any vulgar sense, though not without profit—the profit which falls to those who minister to those who have plenty, and can pay.

This is why the stranger notes such absence of bustle and dust-raising and ear-splitting noises in the streets, and such well ordered carriages, with clean white covers, and such well-fed and well-groomed cattle and drivers on the ranks. And then the tradesmen—nothing is too much trouble: too delighted to attend you at your carriage, and

take your order for a penny or a pound. The same everywhere. You come to Torquay, and you are made to feel that you are wanted, and that the place was prepared for *you*.

Rich planters and East India Nabobs gave Torquay a rise in life. They wanted to live, and came here and stewed themselves in "Frying-pan Row," when others shivered in rich furs in the bitter east and north-east winds which elsewhere made churchyards fat. The wealth that could afford to live, and not die, came here, and Torquay got its reputation and its profit.

I ran my fingers through the Directory and found professors of nearly everything that can be professed here—so many musicians, so many drawing-masters, so many linguists, so many scientists, so many of everything needful where wealth and rank and culture pass the season.

There is no place in Devon with which Torquay may be compared. It does not need comparison and excites no envy. It is queen. Artists and poets, historians and novelists have all been here, and come again and again, as often as they can, and so all its gems—Torre Abbey and Cockington, its walks and drives and climbs and coves, have been painted and sung and written about without end.

Torre and Torquay are practically one, and those who are jealous for its reputation are anxious that it should not become too popular amongst the wrong set.

This, I suppose, is the least Devonshire town in Devonshire. You are just as likely to hear a Durham "burr" as a Devon "u," and to see a Scotch or Irish name over a shop as a Devon one.

Socially the town and the villa have little in common. There is a Torquay which wakes up after the villa dresses for dinner. The villa takes the morning—drives, rides, attends lectures, goes to the clubs and concerts and what-not at the Bath Saloon, and then retires, and is no more seen except on special occasions. If you are curious you may know that the villas on the hills are throbbing with a social life of which the town has no part. The town has made its profit, and then wakes up and relaxes a bit—talks over business and amusements and politics. It is very keen on politics.

There are two seasons—winter and summer—each perfect in its way. During the summer yachting is supreme. There is a yacht club run by gentlemen for gentlemen, and the Regatta week is a carnival.

There is no better place on the coast for yachts than Torbay, and no place on the coast where the sailing can be witnessed to better advantage than on the cliffs.

Torquay is growing, growing, growing every year. It has swallowed up villages, and is moving towards Paignton with its splendid sands.

Malachite, madrepore and terra cotta abound—if Torquay can be said to have a trade, it is art.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE heart and soul of Devon is the Moor, which has many names, but is one moor, fringed and embroidered with beautiful pasture land, and by rocky cliffs washed by the many-tinted, many-sounding sea. The towns are in this borderland, so many outposts of civilisation; and the moor, with its hills, and combes and tablelands, bays and rivers, occupies the interior, and trickles down, as it were, to the backdoors of the towns. Sometimes you step out of the town on to the peat and heather, the bog grass and miniature patches of loneliness; and sometimes the moor is just as far away as you can see from your window. In any case it is not distant.

Without the moor Devon would be another county, and the people another people with another history. When a man is hipped, jaded, or ill he flies to moor, with that sort of instinct which makes other men turn to their native air to be set up again.

In the Duchy men turn their faces to the sea and breathe new life, but here they turn to the moor. In the Duchy people go from one sea-place to another for a change of air—from Falmouth to Newquay; from St. Ives to Penzance; but here they turn their backs to the sea and march inland—to Moretonhampstead, to Okehampton, to Princetown—anywhere where there is peat and heather, and long rush grass, and the granite tors are storm swept.

There are "voices" on the moor which call and the people hear—a sort of mystery of the blood which makes us turn to mother. Sometimes a stranger gets under the spell. A clergyman, very aged now, who once lived at Lydford, writes: "Never have I ceased to love Dartmoor with its rugged hills and grand amphitheatre of tors, into which when I entered I felt compelled to uncover my head as in a cathedral." All strangers are not, however, alike, and some just

glimpse at what looks like a land of billows rolling away into desolation, and turn their backs to it.

Dartmoor has a literature, a big one now; but it was not always so. Thomas Carington, a Plymouth man and a poet, took the moor in hand. His book became a classic and found its way into the twopenny boxes—a finer edition, bound in calf, sixpence. Then Mrs. Bray made revelations in prose. Then a younger generation, sweeping aside poetry and fairy cobwebs, took possession, and went to work in the scientific spirit. Mystery, fiddle-de-dee! Everything could, would, and should be accounted for. Every path and pound, hut and monument, had its history. They attacked the Druids, and the Druids fled. The new school possessed the modern spirit and worked backwards—through Saxon and Dane, Roman and British occupations; through the giants, and dwarfs, the bone age, the stone age, and all the ages. There is another school which thrills at everything—when the river gurgles, when the wind sighs, when the mist rises, when the sun shines—all is lovely and inimitable and mysterious, and makes very pleasant reading.

At Moreton I chanced upon the remnants of a book which someone had apparently used for pipe-lights and left behind for brother tourists. The author was very strong on the poetical and psychological and other sides of mist—Dartmoor mist, of course.

I asked a man what the people called a "mist," and he said they called it "vog," that is to say, when it was thick; and when it wasn't thick they didn't notice it. He didn't thrill when I mentioned the matter to him.

I consulted the fragments of a book in the coffee room again. I chanced upon something like this: William Yeo, a dweller on the moor, did something forbidden by the ten commandments; and, somehow or other, it was all the fault of the mist getting on his nerves and making him see everything in wrong perspective (morally, of course) that there was a tragedy.

What really happened was very simple—something like this:—

The Real.

"Dang my old bones! Vog again! And tes cruel bad for rumatiz."

The old sow in the sty across the yard grunted.

"Well, 'spoase must mait th' pigs, vog or no vog," says William Yeo, picking up the bucket at his feet.

Then he went about his business, as usual.

The Ideal.

William Yeo descended into the cold kitchen and opened the door, letting in a swaithe of damp, cold air which sent a shiver through his whole body. He stepped into the yard and looked around—nothing was visible, nothing, nothing! (Skip three following paragraphs about "nothing.")

He stretched out his arm, opening wide the fingers of his hand, which were lost, as it were, to him in the dim, shadowy, impenetrable, impalpable, opalesque mist. He could not see his arm, not below the elbow, certainly. As far as vision went the fingers on his hand were lost to him.

Was it instinct that made him bring his closed fist against his chest, striking himself hard so as to be sure that he was man, and not part of the mist which swallowed up everything.

All through his life William Yeo had felt it a terrible inheritance to be a child of the mist. All his life he had felt this grey something dwarfing his perceptions and limiting his range of moral vision, so that it could not be said of him that he had any true perspective. (Skip again).

William Yeo heard a muffled sound—it was a grunt. The old sow and her family wanted feeding. He understood the appeal—yes, he understood so much; the cold, chill mist of the moors, which had sterilised and stunted much of the man, left him human to this appeal, &c., &c.

His bones ached; the cold penetrated his marrow, and he had no words at command which would meet the case beyond "dang my old bones!" The bucket at his feet, which he kicked as he moved, recalled him to the actualities of life.

The original owner of the book tore out a few pages here for pipe-lights, but the story was uninterrupted. William Yeo feeds the pigs and goes in to breakfast, still "danging" his old bones. And then, some hundreds of pages on, it is discovered that it was all through this impenetrable, opalesque vog that William Yeo led a double life, and was popped into a well by Mrs. William Yeo, who, living an indoor life, hadn't quite so much vog on the brain.

Perhaps I was unlucky, for I only saw ground mists rising from the valleys, just as happens wherever there is water. Others more lucky may experience agreeable sensations in chill, damp vog on the banks of rivers and streams, or by the side of silent pools on bog-land.

* * * * *

It is supposed that the moors were once much more thickly inhabited than now, when modern folk live in lonely farms and cottages; and if you walk a few miles you'll begin to wonder what is meant by such words as "over-population" and "over-crowding," and the need for emigration from the Old Country in order to prevent everybody treading on everybody's heels. If you want to be alone with Nature you are all right here, for there is not a cottage visible, not even when you jump upon a tor and look around.

The antiquarians say that in the Neolithic age men thronged the uplands, and then, later on, the moors were well inhabited by men who just scratched the earth for minerals, and "streamed" the brooks for tin. Relics of the long, long ago there are now, but not so abundant as formerly. All the antiquarians for the last century have been begging and praying the few inhabitants to leave the moors alone.

Stone is used for almost everything, and is made to take the place of timber on farms—for gate-posts and lintels especially—and ancient monuments are the very thing for the purpose. It is wonderful to see the ease with which an enormous block of granite is split, and with the fewest of tools. A priceless ancient monument soon ceases to be priceless and ancient, and is lugged off on a sort of sledge. Then the road contractor comes along. He is in luck. A stone avenue and a hut circle once on Sherberton Common became road metalling. The conscience of the district was then disturbed, and the local authority instructed him that *in future* the roads were not to be mended with the remains of ancient monuments!

The moor has its silent lovers as well as its rhapsodists, who are lovers also, though inclined to talk too much and too often. It is all very wild and desolate; soft and beautiful, weird and sublime, according to the locality, and sometimes there is a mixture of all to be found in a single ramble, only one is apt to tire of too much praise in the superlative key, and to remember that there is a world outside this spot wherein some beauty and weirdness and grandeur may be found. The local guide books are mostly pitched in the superlative key. This place is *the* one real genuine Garden of Eden; beyond there is nothing, they seem to say, and, in time, one wearies.

The best known beauty spots of Dartmoor are on its borders, and it is a luxury only to walk mile after mile on springy turf with short grass, and then to climb a mound and look on the land rolling away in broad undulations, with little to break the view except vast granite rocks, the silent watchers of silence.

"THE HEART AND SOUL OF DEVON IS THE MOOR."

A city man will probably want to be broken in a bit before he cares for moor scenery. He wants a genuine lover, who won't talk too much, to show him over, and let him watch the play of light and shadow upon the gorse and heather; and then descend the combes, and wander along the streams playing hide and seek amongst bracken and fern, and watch the broken sunbeams dance upon the bright water rippling over the pebbles, or leaping into delicious foam. The moss-covered rocks and banks of wild flowers, and the harmony and peace everywhere, will in time gain upon a man with an eye for beauty, and soul for anything outside of bricks and mortar. If appreciation come gradually, so much the more lasting the impressions.

The moor won't be "done" in five minutes. If you wish to carry away impressions which you can recall hereafter at the sight of a bit of heather, or of a foxglove bending over maidenhair ferns trembling in the breeze, then you must look at it long enough. Then, if you have sympathy, memory will do the rest.

One may scamper over the moor and see some beauty spots in most unexpected places. From Okehampton, or Bridestowe, one may reach Cranmere Pool, the reputed birthplace of four rivers—the Okement, the Taw, the Dart, and the Tavy—but which, however, has the distinction of being the most desolate spot in the whole county. Desolate is hardly the word. It is what Devonians call "wisht," and gets upon the nerves. It is one of those spots where "wishtness walketh," as though it were some living spirit doomed to pass eternity in a region of gloom, seared by lightning, and surrounded by bog and morass, which cattle avoid and birds fly over silently.

This place has its legend. The spirit of Benjamin Yeare, formerly mayor of Okehampton, was condemned to bale out Cranmere Pool with a sieve. He was artful, and one day finding a dead sheep he skinned it and put the skin over the sieve and performed his task. Poor Tregeagle, who was condemned to bale out Dozmary Pool in the Duchy with a holed limpet shell, does not seem to have heard of this simple plan; and this is one of the very few instances in which the Devonian, in legend, is more artful than his Cornish cousin. As a rule, the Cornish like to represent themselves as "slim" enough to cheat one another, and then "Old Artful." The Devonian is more modest.

CHAPTER XX.

THE pixies of the two counties are nearly related; they have the same fairy rings on heath and moorland, dance the same dances, have the same attachments to families, and play the same sort of pranks upon people coming home from markets and revels more merry than wise.

In the Duchy the pixie proper is an open-air fairy, and then there are the nuggies, who take charge of things underground, and by mysterious knocks and sounds direct miners where to find rich deposits of tin and copper. Nuggies, like pixies, play tricks at times, but, on the whole, are useful and friendly to humans.

In Devon, however, there is a distinction between open-air and underground pixies. The former haunt the moors and streams, and often attach themselves to families on farms, doing their work for them at times, making the cows fruitful, the butter rich, and the cheese good. Then they preside over births and deaths and marriages, and show maids in dreams on Michaelmas and Christmas eve visions of their true loves. The ancient pixies had eyes for beauty. Wherever you are, always visit the spots patronised by them.

In the Chudleigh Glen, one of the loveliest spots in Devon, is the Pixies' Hole. A tributary of the Teign tumbles in a succession of cascades over a staircase of gigantic boulders, and the gorge is covered with ferns which have here found the secret of perpetual youth: here is the Pixies' Hole, which the devil once visited, and left his "Pincushion" behind; and you are required to stick a pin into the soft moss by way of homage to the little people. The "Pixies' House" is at Sheepstor, and the "Pixies' Parlour" at Ottery St. Mary, the ceiling of which is formed by the roots of trees. This is the scene of Coleridge's "Song of the Pixies," and the poet cut his initials, S.T.C., and left them behind by way of homage. Cyphers innumerable have been cut into the walls of the Parlour.

In Cornwall "Old Artful" is credited with taking a meddlesome, and often impertinent interest in church building. If a church is in the wrong place, it was "Old Artful" who arranged it, and if the tower is too low, it was "Old Artful" who removed at night the courses which the builders laid by day; but in Devon the fault was put on the pixies who, for instance, would have Lynton Church built

where it is, and not at Kibsworthy, as intended. Every day workmen brought materials to the spot, and every night they were removed, and the pixies had their way at last.

These are the good pixies, and in olden times every settle at the cottier's fire-place upon the moors had room for its pixie, and woe to the habitation which the blithe, jocund and industrious little spirits forsook!

The bad pixies worked underground, and were associated with the lawless men who worked for metals.

There was, at one time, war between the good and bad pixies, and the good were hardly pressed by the bad, who forged their weapons in the mines, tipping their arrows with the metals which they hammered with silver hammers upon silver anvils, and then tempering them in magic pools underground. The good pixies had not much skill in war, so they were pushed hard and were sore distressed, and returned at last to the Island of Rocks, in the valley of the waste Okement, where there are oak trees and ferns, and mountain ash and wild raspberry, and the only sound is running water. The bad pixies assembled in an abandoned mine close by, and were sure of an easy victory, for what had the good fairies to rely on but moral weapons? Moral weapons against steel-tipped arrows tempered in the magical pools! Only a walk over!

The good pixies set to work and cut turves and built themselves a ring, and each as he laid his turve bethought himself of one good act which he had done to man, woman, or child. Then they huddled together, awaiting the dawn when the bad pixies would come out in their battalions and attack. It was their last resource.

With the dawn arose the mists from the river, and the bad pixies charged again, and again, and yet again, but could not climb over the fortifications of new cut turves consecrated by the memories of good deeds. And when the sun gathered strength, ring upon ring of ambient light rose from the turves and floated over the moors, and where they rested a fairy ring of greenest grass sprung up, within which the good pixies might dwell in peace and safety evermore.

These are the pixie rings which one sees upon the moors, and on the bleak Blackdown tableland, where the "Pixie Garden" is. And if one crosses these rings on moonlight nights he must turn his pockets inside out by way of "homage," or he will be pixie-led, and bound with gossamer films, and made sport of.

Pixies were anciently so bound up with human life that the church could not drive them away. They were real enough. Here

is the personal recollection of an Exeter man who never left his native Devon :

"When I was a little boy, unacquainted with any of the ologies except taw-ology, the hills and woods and meadows surrounding my native village were peopled with fairies, nymphs, and pixies. When my venerable grandfather came home late at night, as he sometimes did, at harvest time, and on other festive occasions—with an unusually red nose and a somewhat thick voice—he was sure to have missed his way, 'all owing to them beggaring little pigsies' against whose mischievous pranks he had failed to take the infallible precaution of turning his pockets inside out. The pixies are little rural Bands of Hope as far as their dislike of over-drinking is concerned; for it is commonly related that, when a farmer or a labourer has indulged in a 'cup of zider' too much, he is sure to be led a 'purty dance' on going to his home; indeed, he is accustomed to feel his usually steady head spinning round like a mill wheel, and to hear 'they little bits of pigsies a-laughing and a-tacking their hands for joy' at their success in leading him astray."*

The hunter after fairy lore must walk warily and talk discreetly now, or he will hear nothing. A pencil and note-book will frighten away all recollections. Still, there are stories, and you may be lucky enough to hear something in an out-of-the-way place, like Chagford, where there is a "Pixies' Parlour" in a corn-field near Combe Farm, formed by granite boulders curiously grouped.

PIXIE STORIES.

"Do I know a fairy story?" What questions yu du ask, to be sure.

I know it's all fulishness, but there was a story about the man who brought home a fairy and tied her to the bedpost with his garters —and in the morning all that he saw was a great big leek which he picked up on the road the night before as he was coming home from the fair.

It's all fulishness, I know, but all the maidens in the place had fine fun, and Tom Bovey (that's the name) was called "Tom Kiss the Leek" until he died. It happened like this.

Tom was coming home late, as usual, from the fair, and as he went across the pixie-ring in the moonlight he saw a fairy all drest in green, looking sweetly at him. So he picked her up carefully, and when he

* Elias Tozer, late Editor *Devon Weekly Times*.

"THE ONLY SOUND IS RUNNING WATER."

got home he woke up his wife and told her, as well as he could, that he had the loveliest maiden in his pocket that man ever clapped eyes on.

Tom's wife said nothing, only watched him tie up the fairy to the bedpost with his garters; and then Tom fell asleep, and what he dreamt he never told, only the next morning he saw a great big leek staring him in the face. So he asked his wife what it meant? She said it was the fairy queen all clothed in green which he brought home, and made such a to-do about.

Then the truth dawned upon him and he felt ashamed, and took the leek and threw it into the garden. Now, whether Tom was not quite sober, or whether his tale was true, I do not know, but no sooner did the leek touch the ground than it turned into a fairy once again—the loveliest, daintiest little thing dressed in green, and there sprang out of the flowers, and from the leaves, and from everywhere, thousands upon thousands of fairies, who encircled their princess and danced off with her, shouting, "We've got her again! We've got her again!"

Tom ran in and told his wife, and both went into the garden and searched and searched, but nowhere could the leek be found. Only the pig was in the garden, and they drove it out.

When the story was known the neighbours said that the pig ate the fairy and that Tom kissed the leek.

I know it's all fulishness, but that's the story.

* * * * * *

Did you ever hear tell the story of the Pixies and the Tulips?

Well, then, this is true, as all the old people of the village know, and there is the cottage still standing, with the cob walls and the thatch roof. An old woman lived there and kept school, and we called her "Goody." There is a garden, and behind the garden is a meadow, and this meadow was the pixies' playground. Goody had a bed of beautiful tulips in her garden when they were rare in these parts, and the pixies took such a fancy to the flowers that at nights they brought their babies and put them in the cups and rocked them to sleep. And Goody use to sit in the garden and listen to the sweet melodies coming from the flowers as they rocked to and fro in the evening breeze. This was the pixies singing their little ones to sleep before they went off to play in the fairy rings. The tulips did not wither like other flowers, and gave out perfumes which did not belong to

them, so everyone knew they were pixies' flowers. And Goody would let no one pluck a single bloom—no, not one.

Now, when Goody died the tulips were rooted up and the patch sown with parsley, but it never grew, and nothing would grow but weeds, for the pixies would not allow it.

Goody was buried in the churchyard, and the pixies took care of her grave, which was covered quickly with the greenest grass, and the prettiest flowers which no one planted sprung up, for there was no one to look after Goody's grave, who was an old maid, and had no relations in the village. And so it went on year by year, and as her body turned to dust so the flowers faded, and then the grass grew rank, like the rest.

Everybody knew it was the pixies' way of showing gratitude to Goody for minding the tulips which they used for cradles.

I don't know what grows in the garden now; and 'tis a long time since the pixies were seen in the meadow which has been ploughed and planted with taties and cabbage, and market stuff.

The highest peaks on Dartmoor are near Okehampton, not "the ugly, dirty, stupid town" which Canon Kingsley says it once was. Just now it is a splendid little moor town, built between two streams, to sojourn in. Here are the celebrated tors—High Willes, Yes Tor, West Mil Tor, and the famous Row Tor which has figured so largely in fiction and romance. Here you stand on the borderland between cultivation and moorland waste over which silence reigns, where you may feel the mysterious power of solitude, and understand why it was that people of old raised granite crosses by the wayside, to kneel down at and ask for the protection of high heaven, before venturing on wastes so untrodden and unknown.

One shivers at the thought that any human beings live in "cob" huts in such a region in the dead of winter, when winds roar, and rains descend in floods, and snow lies upon the ground in deep rifts vexed only by tempests. Yet they do, and love it!

This is the region hunted by the ghostly "wish hounds"—hounds without heads, followed by headless horses and riders, hunting down the deathless soul of some poor human who sinned and died long centuries ago. The hounds and the riders come out on the chase when Nature seems at war with itself, and the solitary dwellers on the wastes hear above storm and tempest the agonising shrieks of the flying victims against whom they shut and bar their doors, and crouch by low-burning peat fires, and tremble. "No forgiveness, no forgiveness!" is the terrible moral of the story.

And who may doubt the truth of the legend when the inhabitants of the moor tell you they have *heard* the hunt, and have been out in the open and *felt* the spectres pass by, as though a mighty rushing wind?

CHAPTER XXI.

DARTMOOR is the birthplace of rivers, and the sources of origin are usually in "cruel wisht" places. The Dart has two sources—East and West. The head is placed in the East—a black, horrid morass, where you may wait a whole day without hearing "the chirp of the ubiquitous stone-chat." The West rises some miles away, behind Row Tor, and there is not much to choose in the matter of dreary waste and solitude. There isn't much encouragement in either place for the infant streams to try to live and grow strong—it is a savage and desolate world, my masters, they first look on, and perhaps they would not struggle were it not that the skies above are blue and look kindly by day, and the stars twinkle encouragement by night. So they struggle feebly on until Dartmeet is reached, and then away to the sea. The great watershed is, in very truth, in the heart of a wilderness—Teign and Dart and Tavy are born here, and run south; so also is the Taw, which is born in a bed of rushes, behind Hanging-stone and Ockment hills, and runs north towards the Severn Sea. The Avon, Erme, Yealm, and Plym are born in places not much less savage and desolate. Then there is the Exe, born in "The Chains" of the Bog King on Exmoor, where silence broods from year's end to year's end. "There is not even the sound of running water until you get down to the eastern slopes connecting Lynton with Simonsbath; and here, among the brown, coarse grass the silence is at last broken by a faint tinkle—the infant voice of the Exe."

The Lyn, which is only a dozen miles in length from its source to the sea, is also born in solitude, but in a cradle of bracken, whortleberry and heather, giving lovely effects for the artist in August and September. Taken from start to finish, this is, perhaps, the most lovely stream in the county. It is so short, and makes so mad a rush, as hardly to have time to know that it is very beautiful and has lived!

Whatever the birthplace, the rivers of Devon have learnt the secret of making ways for themselves through the most picturesque and romantic regions, and clothing everything about them with beauty. In a dry summer the streams languish; they are then but thin, poor trickles, with hardly spirit enough to leap over boulders and form cascades. The mosses and long grasses dry up, and the little trout look reproachfully through the shallows. Life is hardly worth living. Then, with the rain, the streams come rattling, leaping down, foaming, bubbling, rejoicing, and the little trout are glad, and once more the borders of the streams are alive with mosses and grasses, ferns and flowers. And in winter—a Devon winter with its rainfall and heavy snow—the streams rise and overflow their banks, and rush through gorges, and overleap precipices, and rush headlong, roaring to the sea, the blue mother whose lap is never full.

Devon streams are all beautiful some time or other of the year, and in some place or other, and there is good trout fishing in all of them, though the fish run small—about eight to the pound, and some wily old "cannibals" who will not be caught, and do more mischief than they are worth.

Then there is salmon; only salmon, notwithstanding all safeguarding, does not seem to get a "good time," unless it be thought by salmon wits to be happiness to be chivied and hunted from its cradle by trout, and heron, and kingfisher. Then when bigger, but still in early youth, along comes the otter, and the night poacher with spears and nets, and licensed anglers with rod and line. Then the salmon gets to the sea and takes a broader view of things, and becomes more robust and more valuable, but it is still timid, and has to run the gauntlet of bold sea pirates, in the shape of dogfish and sharks and all the gluttons of the deep.

Old fishermen declare that the salmon is a home sick animal and seldom wanders far away from the river in which it was spawned; and they also say that they can tell by its shape and colour whether a salmon caught at sea belongs to the Taw or Torridge, the Dart, the Exe or the Teign.

Outside Devon the Dart is perhaps best known as the

> "Beautiful river through banks of fern
> Gliding swiftly to the southern sea."

It was Mortimer Collins, the best lyric poet Devon has produced in modern days, who wrote these lines concerning that awful legend which makes the Dart a river goddess which will receive the sacrifice of at least one human heart every year.

"DEVON STREAMS ARE ALL BEAUTIFUL."

"O River of Dart! O River of Dart!
Every year thou claimest a heart!"

And, unhappily, the goddess gets not one but more.

The county is well watered. Five rivers glide swiftly to the southern, and two to the northern sea, and there is no lack of sweet, pure water for the towns for centuries to come, increase as they will. Without its streams Devon would be in a "wisht" plight, for they are the mother of life upon the moors, and their "voices," mingling with the wind and sighing of the long bent grasses, suggest most curious forms of expression savouring very much of rank paganism. Of course, it's only poetry, and if you happen to be at Dartmeet or Two Bridges you are inclined to turn pagan also, and become river worshipper and rock worshipper, and all the rest.

People live the outdoor life here as they do in Yorkshire districts away from factories, and the fact that the weather is never to be depended on five minutes together does not keep them indoors—not a bit of it. They rather like it and make a song of it.

Vust 'er rained,
Thin 'er bloard,
Thin 'er ailed,
Thin 'er snoard;
Thin 'er cumd
A shoer o' rain;
Thin 'er vroz
An' bloard agin.

When it's like this the natives enjoy hunting, or whatever is in season.

Meet him where you may, the Devon man has an out-of-door look about him, and when two meet they can find something to talk about—something to be found in fields or streams, in the air or stables. Then there are games.

I met at luncheon one day a well-to-do yeoman farmer who studied cock fighting in a breezy sort of way. He had just returned from the "land of saints," where there had been some pretty sport. I think he said there were fifty entries of birds from all parts—Birmingham and Manchester were especially mentioned. He looked upon himself as a friend to the feathered race by helping them to enjoy themselves in the most scientific manner. He said: "Bring two birds together and the first and only thing they will do is fight. It's their sport, their recreation, and they enjoy it. Very well. Now the bird is a bungler until he is trained. He wants precision, that is to say 'science.' Two birds without science fighting on a dunghill

mangle one another—they are awkward in their movements and waste themselves, just like ploughboys quarrelling at a fair. Now just you train the bird and put spurs on, and then see him 'play.'

"I do call it 'play'—what else is it? Did you ever see a bird play in any other way? Of course it's 'play,' and you know what the bird thinks of it when he rises all his inches and crows.

"But the spurs? That's where education tells. You give Tommy Atkins the finest weapon of precision, and teach him how to use it. Why? In order to reduce human suffering to a minimum. We put spurs on birds; and why? To reduce suffering, of course. One clean cut, and all's over.

"It's worth a fiver to hear any bird crow. It is his triumph of science, that's what it is.

"Everything is in the 'clip' of the spur. The best make is American. Look at this. When it is on it is immovable; the clip is perfect; the stroke is sure. I have tried all makes, and the Yanks come out on top.

"There's more scientific fighting of this sort done in the world now than ever. You didn't know it. I suppose not. Why should you, unless you have birds, and wish to increase their enjoyment on earth?"

This was how *he* put it.

A Devon man prides himself on his knowledge of horses and dogs. He'll go miles simply for the pleasure of watching a level pack of well-turned, straight-legged hounds showing their hunting qualities under the command of a good huntsman; and if he doesn't like what he sees he'll say so in very clear and unmistakable words.

"What do you call your dog?" asked a passer-by of a man walking with a crop-eared mongrel with a stump of a tail.

"Well, sir," replied the owner, speaking Yorkshire, "he was a greyhound and we called him 'Fly,' but we cropped his loogs and coot off his tail and made a mastiff of him, and called him 'Lion.'"

There's no market for that sort of animal here, for the Devonian is too fly himself.

No one ever crosses the moor without looking out for the celebrated little ponies which ramble about the "forest" at will, until they are gathered in and exhibited for sale at the great Michaelmas fair at Brent. The graceful animals are very shy but are most carefully bred, and have been the occasion, during centuries, of more false swearing and bad blood between neighbours than anything else. The man who breeds and deals in horseflesh generally swears hard, and is jealous of

the reputation of the animal he has to sell. The Exmoor men and the Dartmoor men have a lot to say about their respective breeds of ponies, and have never yet been able to agree which is the best. I have seen both, and can only say that if I could not have the one I'd be very content with the other.

Sportsmen don't mind a bit of hard work—an easy kill is no sport. It isn't everybody who can go out fox-hunting, but all the country can get near an otter hunt, which is no child's play if the animal is to have all the laws of the game; and nothing does a sportsman detest more than to see an unfair or untimely kill; but a day with the hounds now is not one-half as fatiguing as aforetime, when the master of a pack left his home at two in the morning, "jogged on to Exebridge, left his pony there, then drew up the Barle, and killed his otter on the way. Then a crust of bread and cheese at Withypool, and at it again, over Winsford Hill to the Exe, where he killed another otter." Home with dogs at night, after having covered at least sixty miles.

When a man can't hunt he'll fish, and add one more to the number of the enemies of the salmon, which has more pursuers than any fish that swims.

A Devonian likes to win, but if he can't win he'll lose rather than be left out in the cold. At the parish church of Haccombe, near Teignmouth, the smallest parish in the kingdom, is the memorial of a sporting event in the shape of two horse shoes nailed up to the church door. The terms of the bet are not preserved, but Sir Henry Carew won a manor of land by swimming his horse "a vast way into the sea and back again." As Sir Henry was but a poor swimmer himself the risk was such as only a man mad or desperate would take. However, he won, and there are the two horse shoes nailed to the church door.

Gentlemen used to play for high stakes. Thomas Dowrish, one of the "very ancient and gentile tribe of Dowrish," lost the manor of Kinnerleigh to his cousin John Northcote at a game of picquet.

In country houses whist is general; and if you care to make a fourth there is seldom any difficulty. Country people are fond of their rubber, "with all the rigour of the game"—a trifle on the odd trick and double on the rub. The "little bit" on is just for sport—and ladies when playing are keen on the odd trick. The story is told of a former Vicar of Moreton who had a fit whilst dealing. The company rubbed his nose with hartshorn, burnt feathers, and did all things usual in such cases. When he recovered he was expected to say something good.

"What's trumps?" he asked quietly.

CHAPTER XXII.

"A world of heather
Purple of foxglove, yellow of bloom."

ONE moor is smaller than another, and all have their lovers. Just now the moors may be divided into three parcels—the Blackmore land, the Kingsley land, and the Gould-Philpotts-Crossing land.

The land of the Doones is only a portion of the Blackmore literary estate, which really comprises North Devon and a slice of Somerset; but from Exmoor to Barnstaple, and from Lynton to Tiverton the estate best shows the marks of the Blackmore cultivation.

In a holiday scamper the Doone land will first suggest itself. Certainly it is the best talked about and known by reputation. One can slip away from Lynton, or any of the places on the north coast, and get quickly into the Doone land, but it will be just as well not to take a measuring tape, or even the book in one's pocket. The romance won't stand too much tape-measuring on the spot.

One remembers the story well enough. There is a delicious water-slide, and a stiff climb, with sufficient danger to make any ordinary Christian tourist "curly" up the spine. Then there is the sweet Lorna, who would look well in any setting, but somehow this place seems to suit her, and you like to see the big boy canoodling around. Then you pull aside the branches and see a long procession of the Doones, and the stately Sir Ensor—Sir Ensor in armour, Sir Ensor in patent shoes—the gentleman. Shut your eyes, and you can see it all before you leave Lynton; or, if you like, you can get as far as the "Lorna Doone" inn at Malmsmead, and dream in the land of this Devon classic.

Malmsmead is at the mouth of the Badgworthy Valley, but the real Doone Valley is a little farther on, where you tread Exmoor turf. There is a "Lorna's Bower," but you can pass that by—a name and nothing but a tea-house—until you come to Badgworthy Wood and the Water-slide.

We are on sure ground now—here is the lovely little cataract, and over it, close to where it tumbles into the Badgworthy Water, the shakiest of shaky clams carries the path along a dark hillside to where a side valley suddenly opens, commanded at the mouth by a

green hillock, on which a few stones mark the remains of some building, possibly a look-out. Below it, and extending a short distance up the valley to a shepherd's cot, is a confused collection of broken walls and foundations, of which little or nothing can be made. This is the "Doone Valley" of fiction and guide-books and post cards—no precipice, no mountain, nothing to make the spine to curl and the heart stand still. "The valley is an ordinary grassy combe, and a shallow one at that."

Then there is a farmhouse which the Ridds may have lived in, and at Oare are Ridds still residing, and there is the church in which Lorna was wedded to her John, and there is the little window through which the villainous face of Carver Doone showed itself. This part is all right; Carver might have fired a pistol through this window and hit his victim standing at the altar.

If the romance is not all true it ought to be—here is the window, here the altar, here the bride. You can take out your tape measure here and be satisfied—only it is just as well not to have it with you, and then the temptation to be too exacting will be easily resisted.

"'Lorna Doone' to a Devonshire man is as good as clotted cream, almost!" made Blackmore so proud to hear that he printed it in his preface to the sixth edition of his inimitable romance. The moor could hardly bear two such romances, as there is only one valley with the Water-slide, and Jan Ridds are scarce, and such fairy beings as Lorna do not drop from the skies every day. The pilgrimages to the Doone Valley—and there are plenty of them every summer, now—are largely inspired by the imagination of the romancist.

"When I came to myself again my hands were full of young grass and mould; and a little girl kneeling at my side was rubbing my forehead tenderly with a dock-leaf and a handkerchief."

This is the spot that everyone looks for, and there is something like it to be found—a miniature ravine, a tiny stream playing bo-peep amongst the ferns and grasses, losing itself amongst the tangled roots of the greenest mosses, and then leaping into the river below. This is the stream in which little Jan Ridd went fishing for loach one cold St. Valentine's day, and this is the ravine which so many thousands who never saw it have crept through, and dwelt in, and trembled when little Jan Ridd's half-frozen feet slipped upon the treacherous stone.

The Valley of the Doone which pilgrims come to see is a poet's dream, but real enough to all who read the story. Real too, is "gurt Jan Ridd" the lovable man—strong, true and purposeful, and so a type, with Exmoor setting, of what Devon men were and wish to be.

I met a shepherd driving a flock of delicate Exmoor sheep, who told me that he had heard about Jan Ridd and the Doones; but he wasn't very interested in the matter. I thought he had been bored with inquisitive strangers before, for he was a trifle "short" in his manner, and said he supposed it was a "passul" of lies, and he was "sure for sartin" that no man ever lifted a horse saddle and rider over a fence, out of Devon into Somerset. Nothing I could say made him yield one point—not even when we discussed the matter over some very capital cider.

A young yeoman who was going out ottering said if I would accompany him he would introduce me on the way to an old man who was looked on as a sort of wonder in the district for his knowledge of local events, and his memory concerning them. This was one Malachi Vile—and odd as it sounds, Vile is not an unfamiliar surname in Devon, nor is it held in any measure of contempt.

Malachi was at home, not far from his hut. Malachi was a peat cutter, and his forbears lived upon the moor for generations, seldom shifting, and then only from one hut to another, to save the trouble of repairs, or to be nearer the peat bog.

"There be Malachi," said the young yeoman, tapping his strong breeches with a stick. He had "otter" on the brain, and was anxious to be off to the meet, the last for the season. A kindly grin—a "a wish'ee joy ov mun, maister" sort of a grin, spread over his apple-red face, and he was gone.

Malachi had his back to me, and was looking far away over desolate wastes. Population on the moor is sparse, and there is apparently little to look at anywhere but great boulders weathered on the one side and softly tapestried with lichen on the other. He seemed a well set up old man when his head was thrown back. Like the rest of old people on the moor he had the secret of long life. He was said to be eighty years of age. "a queer stick, but no vule."

When I reached him, he was watching some young pigs feeding out of a rough and broken stone trough. Long, lean looking animals I thought them, but Malachi praised them, probably under the impression that I wanted to buy. He grew eloquent, he grew younger: and when I made him understand at last that I was not a dealer, and only wanted to talk a bit, he sat down, and grew cold and old again. He eyed me up and down, and at last took me into the hut.

Mrs. Malachi Vile was there, and took my measure. She was older than her husband, and had small, black eyes full of inquiry. I soon found she was the flint to Malachi's steel.

"Be careful, father," said she, warningly, as she left us alone.

Malachi was the fourth generation of Viles who had dwelt upon the moor; and his own father lived so long that he forgot his own age, and would have lived longer, if he hadn't gone to Barnstaple fair, took more than was good for him, and caught a cold through sleeping in the open.

He had heard, he said, a good deal about the Doones, and people who came on the moor in times of trouble and hid themselves, living as best they could with other vermin. They were a poor, wandering lot, and sent their children out begging, and thieving, and singing carols at Christmas at the farmhouses. The last of the family that he ever heard tell ov perished in the snow, near Challacombe.

Malachi had never heard of any Doone castle or fortifications, or armed bands riding over the moor with Sir Ensor Doone at their head. A few ragged soldiers, who escaped hanging at the hands of Judge Jeffreys, used to skulk on the moor in the old days, and he had heard his own grandfather say that the moor-men used to hunt them just as though they were foxes, and smoke them out of their holes and lairs. A man-hunt on the moor was fine sport.

This is just the sort of country for wretched, miserable hunted men to seek sanctuary in. There were plenty of such men at times in Devon, and the hunt was sometimes so hot after them that they were glad to slip into churches and lay hold of "sanctuary rings" fixed in the chancel walls, and so gain a little breathing time.

There was an ancient and mysterious tribe, subject to no law but their own sweet will, known as the "Gubbins," and they levied tribute upon all travellers passing through what they called their "territory" in and around Lydford Gorge. Old Fuller says, "Gubbins' land is a Scythia within England, and they pure heathens within. Their language is the dross of the dregs of the vulgar Devonian. They hold together like burrs: offend one and all will revenge his quarrel." A Gubbins of pure blood would be interesting now, but one characteristic is common to moor-men, who "stick together like burrs" in a quarrel against an intruder. The moors for moor-men! *

But the Doone's and the Gubbins's were superior people to the Cheritons—semi-nude savages who dwelt within living memory only a few miles out of Exeter. The Cheritons were a family living on their

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* "And near here is 's Gubbins' cave—
A people that no knowledge have
Of law, of God, or men:
Whom Cæsar never yet subdued:
Who ye lawless lived, of manners rude:
All savage in their den."

own freehold for generations, living and breeding like rabbits, until they degenerated into real savages. The patriarch of the tribe slept at night, and reclined during the greater part of the day, in a cider cask, well bedded up with hay and dried ferns, and the youngsters sheltered themselves in holes cut into hayricks and woodstacks. As the Cheritons lived near Dartmoor, Baring-Gould took them under his literary wing. Here is the respectable old patriarch:

"'Log!' said the voice of Cobbledick the old from the cyder cask.

"'I be a-logging like the blue blazes,' answered Cobbledick the younger.

"Then a dry and dirty hand emerged from the cask and with a gorse bush struck at the girl—that is, at Cobbledick the younger. She evaded the blow.

"'Be quiet, vather, or I won't log any more!'

"'You won't?' with a horrid curse; 'then I'll make you if I whacks and whacks till you be all over blood and prickles. There, I will, I swear. Glory rallalulay!'"

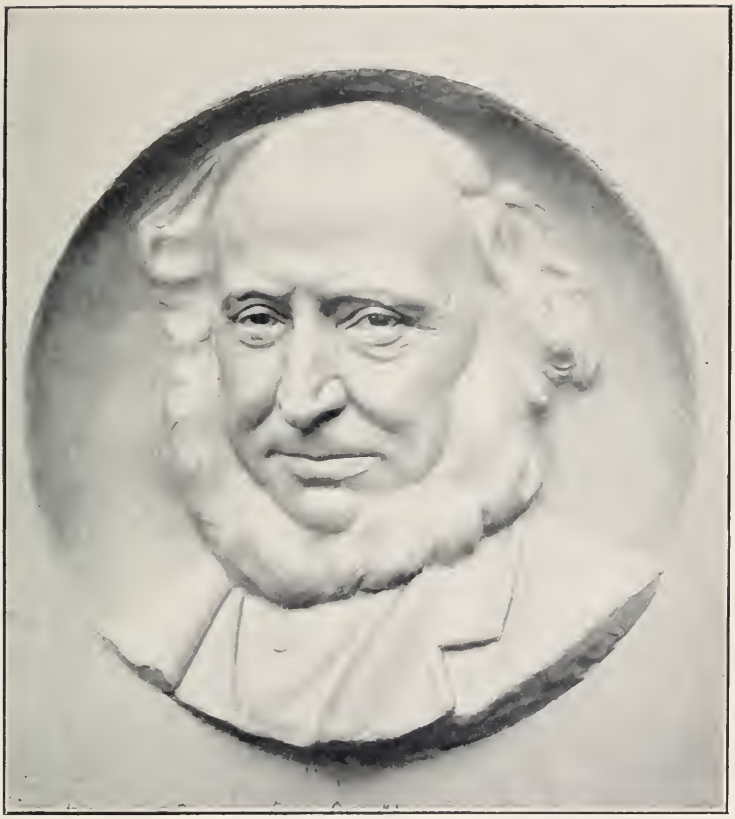
This, the lowest type of human life in Devon, lasted the longest—down to within fifty years ago, and almost within sound of cathedral chimes.

These bits of strong local colour have gone now in the land wherein if a man said "mummy dummy" to a ghost it would vanish; and wherein, it is said, a person preparing for confirmation gave the commandments as "Crismas, Lady-day, Aister, Whitsuntide, Our Vair, and brither Jan's birthday."

Some things of interest, however, remain. It is wonderful to see what a moorman can do with old sacks—give him two, and his wardrobe is just complete. A sack is easily converted into a smock with arm-holes; and when the rain comes down pitilessly, what better and more comfortable than a sack thrown across the shoulders? Moreover, what more comfortable at night, when far from home, or lost in a fog, or drifted up in the snow, than to creep into a sack, and sleep? A labourer driving a team, or working in the open, will fly to an old sack for protection from a storm. The old habit is everywhere in evidence.

A sheepskin comes handy to a Chagford man—

Old Harry Trewin
Had no brutches to wear,
So he stawl a ram's skin
Vur to make en a pair;
Wi the woolly zide out
And the fleshy zide in,
They sticked pretty tight
To old Harry Trewin.



"THE CREATOR OF LORNA DOONE."

CHAPTER XXIII.

DEVON is free from factories—it has a few workshops, but of factories, belching out fire and smoke, sulphur and acid gases, polluting everything, scorching everything, killing everything, it has none. It is virgin still.

Nowhere very far from the sea, it has the advantages of two airs—each sweet, pure, delicious—that of the sea and that of the moor; and it has been discovered that both differ, yet mingle to the great benefit of those who breathe them. If a national playground is wanted, Devon offers it; if a sanatorium, here it is.

From the highest land, where the rivers rise, the blue sea may be seen, north and south. On the moors, towns are few and small. The "simple life" may be led here without much intrusion, and lovers of Nature need never weary.

The moors should have great attraction for people given to psychical research, for, if you sleep on the ground after anointing your eyes three days with vervain, dill, and St. John's wort, the spirits of the air become visible!

The inhabitants of the moors appear to have discovered the secret of living to a "good old age," but what the secret is—unless it be fresh air and plenty of it—I cannot guess.

I inquired of an old woman in a sun bonnet, and quite sprightly for ninety. She said she didn't know, she was sure, only most people lived to be aged, and some lived so long as to forget how old they were. I learnt from her that weakly children died young, and those who survived the kicks of horses, immersions in farm ponds and running streams, and other accidents, grew up strong and hearty, and then lived much longer than their nearest and dearest thought reasonable!

She had peculiar views about bathing and tubbing, which, she said, did very well for children and young people, but for grown-ups she thought that washing all over at one and the same time was a mistake. One should do it in sections. There was nothing the matter with her old man, except that his rheumatics were "cruel bad" at times. He was a shepherd, and shepherds always lived to be aged because of the smell of the sheep early mornings. The breath of cows inhaled mornings fasting was also good. She had reared ten children,

and here she was at ninety, looking hale and buxom in a sun bonnet; not a blotch on her face, and yet she was an enemy to bathing, and had only taken medicine—"doctor's traade"—once since the maid Susan was born.

A medical man depending on a moorland practice would, if he survived long enough, at last learn for himself the secret of living on air, and the sweet breath of cows, and the smell from fleeces, for there is precious little prospect of his earning anything except when he's wanted to set broken bones.

Country people have a dislike for physic; first, because it is expensive, and second, because "when the doctor is at the door the sexton is at the gate." To be of any good, physic must be highly coloured, strongly scented and flavoured, and if it "warms the innards" as it goes down, so much the better. There is an idea that there must be pain to cure pain, unless the cure is effected by "charm," so a bottle of "doctor's traade" should gripe well in order to be worth the money.

Some "infallible cures" are not recognised by the faculty—a very ancient one is to cure rheumatism by the sting of bees. It wants courage to thrust one's hand into a bees' hive and be well stung about the wrist, but it is an article of belief that the rheumatism disappears as the stings heal. Most people prefer the disease to the remedy.†

An old charm, and one not so very well known, is powdered images taken surreptitiously from a church font. An apostle is better than a saint, and a saint is better than a gargoyle, but any stone image will do for something or other. Cromwell and his soldiers have had to bear a good deal of undeserved blame for image-breaking, when, in fact, the real culprits have been people who wanted "Peter stone" for the cure of sores and wounds by external application, and also to sprinkle on water to be drunk fasting for internal complaints.

Almost everything which can be carried away surreptitiously, or stolen from a churchyard, makes a good charm for the cure of something. Lead cut from a roof, a door key, water from the baptismal font, will cure disease and drive away evil spirits. Churchyards have often been rifled for dead men's teeth to be carried about as charms for toothache. A great number of charms—for example, for the healing of burns, the staunching of blood, the cure of fits, the drawing of a thorn from the flesh—contain invocation to saints and the Holy Trinity. St. Peter, amongst the apostles, seems to have been the

† Since writing this the Rev. W. T. Adey tried the experiment on himself with the result that he was cured of chronic rheumatism. The formic acid in the "sting" of bees was the curative agent. The rev. gentleman announced the fact to the members of the Saltash Baptist Literary Society.

most relied on. Even witches do not disdain invocations. An incantation for the recovery of lost money is an example:

Flibberty gibberty, flasky flum,
Calafac, tarada, lara, wagra wum,
Hooky, maroosky, whatever's the sum,
Heigho! presto! Money come!
In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, Amen!

Poor cattle suffer a good deal, and their owners meet with great losses at times through the ignorance of "white witches" and "white wizards," and the treatment (often revolting) which they prescribe for the cure of ordinary diseases.

Milk may be bewitched so that it will yield no cream, and cream may be bewitched so as not readily to turn to butter. To counteract the spell, make a fire of sticks gathered in four parishes, and set the milk upon it, and whilst it is boiling walk three times around a stool against the sun, and there will be cream, and the cream will turn to butter which no witch can cast an evil spell upon.

There is a superstition that things planted in the ground during Easter week, especially on Good Friday, will grow "goody." People plant their potatoes and peas on Good Friday instead of going to church!

There is a curious superstition with regard to water used in baptism. Fresh water must be used for each child, otherwise number two will take upon itself the sins of number one, and number three the sins of one and two, and so on.

But you must not marry in Lent or you will live to repent.

With regard to baptismal water, people were at one time in the habit of carrying away water left in the font for use in magical rites: and this is the reason why fonts in parish churches were at one time required to be covered and locked.

Some ideas associated with charms are pretty. A child who gathers moonbeams will never lack gold.

Horses treading on moonwort will cast their shoes.

A maiden may see her future husband if she dips a clean handkerchief into running water, or into a wishing well, on Michaelmas Eve, and then lays it across her bed. The one true love will appear and lift the handkerchief, kiss it and turn it. The dreamer must not speak, should she awake, or the spell will be broken; and if not broken the dream lover will be her future husband.

I was shown a now rare and curious faded printed broad sheet entitled, "A Receipt for Ill-Wishing," which was sold on market days together with a certain powder. The "white wizard" was

Dr. Tuckitt, of St. Bartholomew Street, Exeter, to whom all inquiries were to be directed. In his day, Dr. Tuckitt had a good practice, and a wide reputation. The powder sold was said to be particularly efficacious for curing cattle and also for making things grow in the ground. If the ground was sour and sterile here was the remedy.

"Take a little of this powder into your right hand and strew it across your house doors, and to the court gates, and to each barn door, reading the first thirteen verses of the 28th Deuteronomy, and no more. Then strew a little of the powder across every gate and bar on your estate, saying these words:—"As thy servant Elisha healed the ground and the waters of Jericho by casting salt therein, so I hope to heal this ground, that no evil may come of it, and that it may yield to me its full strength, and that there might not be any barren land on all this estate; in the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Amen."

There are three kinds of witches and wizards—Black, White, and Grey. The Black is malignant. The white *can* cure and *can* counteract the malice of the Black for a money consideration. To be a white witch is to carry on a business, and people come into Exeter and the towns from long distances in order to get advice and purchase remedies. "White Witches" are well known to local magistrates and the police. The Grey witch is of a different order, and dabbles in the black art, and he, or she (for a "witch" may be of either sex) controls events, shifts curses from one to another, and even "blesses."

Ministers, doctors and schoolmasters have a long and uphill fight before them. "The story of the Witch of Endor is a stumbling-block," a schoolmaster told me.

"Do you really think that the children attending your school believe the twaddle they hear at home?" I asked.

"Why not? How can a child help believing when it is told to say over a burnt finger:

Three wise men came from the East,
One brought fire, two carried frost.
Out fire! In frost!
In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

The burn heals in time. What did it? The invocation. How can a child help believing?"

"Is belief widespread?"

"I should say that every child in this school can repeat some charm. See that girl with a swollen face; she has the toothache."

"THE GREAT CLIFFS HEAVED IN PAIN."

The Schoolmaster called the girl to his side and asked if her toothache was better, and she said it was. Then he asked her what she did to cure it, and she replied that she said three times daily:

"As Peter sat weeping on a stone over against Jerusalem our Saviour passed by and said, 'Peter, why weepest thou?' Peter said unto him 'I have got the toothache.' Our Saviour replied, 'Arise and be sound.'"

Then I asked:

"Did you bathe your face in hot water? Did you put any drops on the tooth? Did you take any medicine?"

The girl said no, nothing was ever done, and the charm "worked." Her mother taught her the charm. She was nearly well now.

The Schoolmaster assured me that if he were to say publicly that the charm was of no avail, a mere superstition, and an insult to human intelligence, he would be called everything bad under the sun, and told that he did not believe in the Bible.

Children from several villages attended this school, which earned very good grants, and the teachers were obliged to let the "charms" live yet awhile in order to preserve their own authority and reputation for Godliness!

The Schoolmaster was a Nonconformist, and sometimes preached in the villages.

A funny world, my masters!

CURL PAPER STORIES.

There is a legend of Lynton Castle, only there is no castle now, nothing but a castle rock. However, one never knows what may have been in days gone by when the powers of darkness were able to rend the solid earth asunder, and form what is now the magnificent Valley of Rocks.

Once upon a time, the castle was in the possession of the Lady Edith, who had a temper, and sometimes there was no living for her, so violent was she.

A "Black Monk" also lived at the castle, and had her ladyship "under his thumb" in most matters, but even he was obliged to take a stroll in the open and admire the scenery, or what not, when the atmosphere inside the castle was too, too warm.

Lady Edith, the only daughter of Earl Sigvald, was betrothed to her cousin the blue-eyed Earl before his conversion, and after he

became Christian trouble came. The Lady Edith would not be converted, but worshipped the ancient gods; and the Black Monk backed her up.

The blue-eyed Earl sent word to her peacefully, saying, that on the first day of the new moon he would come and claim her; and her ladyship sent back a message which made him turn pale, and then red, and then pale again. He was a very placid man, for the times, but he hanged the messenger in sight of the castle, which seems to have been an unpleasant habit amongst great people when things did not go smoothly.

Lady Edith was well versed in runes and incantations, and her spirit was as bold as her tongue, and when the Black Monk stoop beside her and revealed himself she entered into a pact with him, if only he would defend the Castle from her blue-eyed cousin.

The Black Monk saved the Castle and continued to dwell there, and the Lady Edith was under his thumb.

One day, her ladyship was in her rages, and the bell was rung at the postern gate. The Black Monk had gone out for a stroll to admire the scenery, which everyone knows is very fine.

The Lady Edith opened the wicket herself, and a holy friar stood there, and asked for "something for the missionaries." Now, anything holy got upon her ladyship's nerves, and she shut to the door in the holy man's face with a bang, and called on the Black Monk to throw him into the sea.

The holy friar knew who the Black Monk really was, and made the sign of the cross as soon as he appeared, which so angered him that he rent the earth asunder, and the great cliffs heaved in pain, the Castle disappeared, and the Valley of Rocks was formed.

The Black Monk carried off the Lady Edith, and whoever now sees their figures scudding before the wind, may know that there is anger in the sky, and desolation before them on sea and land.

* * * * * *

There is a story of a "Phantom Cottage" on the Moor, near Buckfastleigh, seen by three young ladies, who committed the fact to writing, and from which Mr. Page quotes in his book on the Rivers of Devon.

"One day, the writer, accompanied by her two sisters, was returning home with her father, who had been shooting. By some means, they contrived to miss him and lost their way. After walking some

time they saw—very much to their satisfaction—a light, which they found proceeded from a cottage by the roadside. Looking through the window they beheld, seated on a bench, crouching over a fire, an old man and woman. 'We looked for a little while, and then, all of a sudden, we were left in perfect darkness, and cottage, man, and woman all disappeared. We *never* moved from where we were standing.'

"The ladies—they were quite girls—were naturally rather frightened, and when they reached home at once made inquiries about this vanishing cottage. It does not appear that they got much information from the villagers—'Yes, it is quite right, it is called the Phantom Cottage of the Moor,' and a rather hazy idea of some wicked deeds connected with the cottage and its inhabitants being mostly all that they could gather.

"The Devonshire peasant is not, as a rule, communicative about matters supernatural, and it was the case here.

"The ladies and their father visited the spot by daylight, but found nothing but a few stones, apparently marking the site of this phantom cottage."

* * * * * *

Marycombe is only a village, but it had its ghost, which came out of a lawyer's bag, in the shape of a "bill of costs," incurred in a Chancery suit. The story runs like this:—

Butcher Drake galloped up to the inn, and nearly tumbled off his horse with fright. The devil was loose in Marycombe Lane. He had seen him, and the poor horse confirmed the story, as well as he could, by trembling in every limb. Butcher Drake was a bold man, and would face anything with skin, horns, and tail, provided it had four legs; but he had seen something moving about with two legs, and the horse took "vright" and he took "vright," and there he was.

"Lord have marcy 'pon uz," said the clerk, who was having his evening's pint with the sexton, who slipped out of the back door and cut across to the vicarage.

Marycombe Lane had a bad reputation, and was said to be haunted by the ghost of a Chancery suit, commenced long, long ago, and continued until the bill of costs ate up the estate. The buildings were falling in, and strange sounds were heard, and strange sights were seen.

"Not for ten thousand worlds would I go back that way this night," said Butcher Drake.

Whilst they were talking, a strange man entered the room and laid on the floor a paste pot, and brush and bag. He was posting bills around the country announcing the sale of the estate "by order of the High Court of Chancery," and then he opened his mouth and cursed roundly the man who had nearly ridden over him as he was fixing up a bill in Marycombe Lane.

"You'm on devil's business, and that's just as bad," said Butcher Drake.

The sexton brought the vicar back with him, but he wasn't wanted.

The estate was sold to a man who had money, and rebuilt the outhouses and stables, and put everything in order, and so laid the ghost of the Chancery suit.

Only Butcher Drake gave up boasting, and to the day of his death never went through Marycombe Lane again after dark.

Whoever reads these stories, and then lives a hundred years, shall not die young.

CHAPTER XXIV.

AT one time there was a forest on Dartmoor, and there is a "forest" now—a courtesy title on paper. There were also mines—tin mines and stannary towns, and a stannary parliament, and "coinage" towns wherein the grey metal was assayed and hall-marked.

Tin mining is very ancient, and it seems probable that it was the Cornish Celts, and not the Devon Saxons who worked the tin on the moors. Tin has a sort of liking for desolate places, where water is, and barren rocks all around, and miners don't care much about landscape scenery as long as the mines are rich. To work in a mine which has "cut rich" is music and scenery combined. The tinners appear to have been a race apart from the bog trotters, and were so fond of revels and frolic, sparring and wrestling, that when they could not get up a row with the bogmen they would have a set-to amongst themselves.

The tinners held an open-air parliament around Crocken Tor, a wild spot, in harmony with the men and their proceedings. The

"THE RIVER SWEEPS PAST."

price and purity of the metal were two important subjects for the consideration of the tin parliament, and adulteration was punished by laying the accused on his back and pouring three ladles of molten metal down his throat! This was the law, and the men of the day were the right sort to enforce it, if they were so minded. It is also said that in early days offenders were crucified. This practice was borrowed from the Romans—about the only thing which was here borrowed, unless, perhaps, a bit of road-making and castle-building may be thrown in.

Old Crocken Tor was the silent witness of many strange scenes; and the granite moss-grown boulders round about were the seats of men having the power of life and death. Then degeneration set in—the old "parliament" became a Stannary Court, and the Stannary Court is now merged in the County Court!

Lydford—mean little Lydford of to-day—had a Castle and a prison, and, in Saxon times, was taxed equally with London; but the Conqueror came and cut its comb. Lydford gave the world the famous exhibition and practice of "Lydford law," which consisted of hanging a man to start with, and then trying him and passing judgment. It is not known whether the jury ever returned a verdict of "not guilty." Probably not, as some compensation might have been claimed by the family of the man judicially murdered.* Judge Jeffreys held his Bloody Assize here. If the shade of my Lord Chancellor visits this earth it will probably come here. The people think so, and tell you that his spirit haunts the castle in the shape of a black pig!

The river Lyd sweeps past the mouldering walls of the castle, and then there is the Cascade, beautiful and treacherous, known far and near as the "Woman in White."

This beautiful gorge was the haunt of Roger Rowle, the outlaw, and leader of a gang of outlaws, and somewhere near here Salvation Yeo slew the King of the Gubbins.

In the church porch is an epitaph which commends itself to watchmakers and the wearers of watches all the world over.

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* The story of a Judge of the Stannary Court at Lydford having hanged a felon in the forenoon, sitting in judgment on him in the afternoon, appears in print in a volume of sermons published in the year 1615; some years before William Browne, of Tavistock, wrote his humorous satire, commencing:

"I oft have heard of Lydford law,
How in the morn they hang and draw,
And sit in judgment after.

What, however, was worse than death was being a prisoner in the Castle awaiting trial. The poet says:

"I know none gladly there would stay,
But rather hang out of the way
Than tarry for a trial."

Impatient social reformers of to-day should have lived then!

"Here lies in horizontal position the outside *case* of George Routleigh, watchmaker, whose abilities in that line were an honour to his profession. Integrity was his *mainspring*, and prudence the *regulator* of all the actions of his life. Humane, generous, and liberal, his *hand* never stopped till he had relieved distress. So nicely regulated were all his motions, that he never went wrong, except when set a-going by people who did not know his *key*. Even then he was easily set right again. He had the art of disposing his time so well that his *hours* glided away in one continual round of pleasure and delight, till an unlucky *minute* put a period to his existence. He departed this life November 14th, 1802, aged 57, *wound up* in hopes of being taken in hand by his Maker, and of being thoroughly *cleaned and repaired* and set a-going in the 'world to come.'"

Tin is the connecting link with the "Cathedral of the Moor" at Widecombe, with which the Prince of Darkness is associated now for aye and ever.

The facts are narrated by the vicar in simple prose, and by the schoolmaster, one Richard Hills, in rhyme, painted on four tablets, to be read in the tower entrance of the church. These rhymed tablets are probably unique.

The church was partially destroyed by lightning one Sunday afternoon, when the congregation were all assembled. First, there was a terrible darkness, then, thunder and lightning, and then, a ball of fire came in at the window and passed through the church. The congregation were all on their knees, or fallen flat on their faces, crying aloud for "mercy." Four were slain, sixty-two wounded were shrieking in their agonies, and in the midst of all a little child, "which scarce knew good from ill," walked placidly about the church, uninjured and unterrified.

These are the simple facts, but the legend enters into more particulars, and affords motive and denouement more completely than is usually found in seventeenth century legends concerning the acts of the Prince of Darkness.

A LEGEND OF SATAN.

Widecombe-in-the-Moor was rich in tin, and the miners served their master, the devil, most gloriously in the days of old. The tinners held high days and holidays, attended fairs and revels on pay days, and then no work was done in mine or in stream until their money was all spent. Widecombe was a prosperous place, and the

devil, who had power over the underground pixies, allowed them to show the miners where there were lodes of tin, and then to throw plenty into the streams, so that there should be no lack of money for cock-fighting and badger baiting, fighting and wrestling, and drinking all the year round—and one year after the other.

There was a fine church, for the parish was large and populous, only the miners stayed outside, never entering even the churchyard gates until carried feet first.

So things went on, until the vicar persuaded the miners to subscribe towards the building of the new tower, which in beauty was to exceed all other towers in Devon.

The Purser of the mine had grown rich, but was getting old, and thought it time to please heaven, although he had walked aforetime hand-in-glove with his Master, who taught him some tricks, whereby he could cheat the merchants who bought the tin, and then cheat the men who worked for it, and yet be looked on as an honest man! He was lucky, even for a mine purser.

The devil was sure of the Purser, and so did not frighten him by proposing any compact. In the ordinary course of events the Purser would be his.

Well, the Purser subscribed handsomely towards the church tower, and when the devil looked over the list of names he was terribly angry. He walked down to the mine, and met the Purser with cash-box under his arm.

"I'll catch you napping one day," said he, and passed on.

The Purser always slept in church: he thought he was safe there.

On Sunday afternoon, October 31st, in the year of our Lord 1638, the Purser went to church, and then to sleep, as usual.

Then something happened.

A horseman rode to the door of the inn at Poundsgate, near by, and called for a drink. He was a *bona fide* traveller, and the smiling landlady remembered afterwards that the tankard of home brewed "sizzled" as it passed down his throat. She also remembered that the traveller rode off in hot haste without first receiving his change from a coin which was as hot as though fresh from the mint. She intended to forget this, but events happened.

The traveller rode off in hot haste for Widecombe, tied his horse to one of the pinnacles of the new tower, and descending to the churchyard kicked some idle children playing therein into an open grave.

The Purser was sleeping in his pew.

The traveller entered the church, seized the Purser by the hair of his head, and carried him aloft, through the roof, and then to where the horse was fastened.

The Purser struggled and struggled, and so frightened the horse that the pinnacle was thrown down, and crashed through the roof.

Then darkness fell upon the earth, and out of the darkness came lightning and balls of fire; and the church rocked when the thunder pealed.

And in the midst of all this terror a little child wandered up and down the aisles, and came to no hurt.

The devil rode off with the Purser, who was seen no more; but the place declined because the pixies would no longer work in their "parlours," making precious ore with silver hammers, and then show the miners where to find it. Tin mining languished, and the pixies and the miners disappeared.

There are some who say joyfully that miners are coming back again; and some who say the land will do very well without them, for where there is mining there is riot, and where there is riot there the devil is.

So there's no pleasing everybody.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE sighing of prisoners is heard at Princetown, which is the moor in cultivation now—a garden of civilisation, an earthly paradise, wherein the bodies and souls of men are cared for and purified, as well as can be.

Princetown is so named in honour of the "First Gentleman in Europe," who found good entertainment here with his friend, the Warden of the Stannaries, Sir Thomas Tyrrhwit, and made love in the royal way to one Dolly Copplestone.

Now, Dolly had a lover, a thick-headed, dumpling-faced Devon lad, who took it into his stupid brains that it would be better for Dolly to be an honest man's wife than anything the "First Gentleman in Europe" could make of her. So the stupid fellow spoiled sport, and whisked Dolly off to Lydford Church, and really married her.

This is a little country romance which had a simple country ending, and no tragedy came of it. "Dolly's Cot," in ruins now, is

at Dartmeet, where she lived to a good old age, and lived so pure and sweet a life that when she died the tinners stopped work and carried her coffin to Widemouth Church; and the women of the moorside walked in the funeral procession wearing "white skirts and white kerchiefs pinned across their shoulders." The story is very sweet—all the sweeter, perhaps, because one hears it here.

Princetown has been a prison for a century. Before the latest *entente cordiale*, French prisoners of war were here in plenty. There was not much trouble taken to guard prisoners, who roamed about pretty much as they pleased, and were glad enough to return at meal times. Officers on *parole* were allowed to live in towns and villages, within certain limits, and were only fined if found fishing up streams past certain boundary stones. It really wasn't very bad to be a prisoner of war if one had a little money with which to buy things, and to grease the palms of men who saw one roaming and fishing out of bounds. People come here now and pay for the privileges which broke the hearts of patriotic Frenchmen to endure.

General Rochambeau was a prisoner. He heard that his soul's idol was about to invade England. *Vivé l'Empereur!* He called for his boots, and paraded up and down, up and down, before his sweet little cottage, in full uniform, impatient for the moment when an orderly should appear with his sword and charger! Only Napoleon never came, but the general was liberated in time to join in the mad rush of the hundred days, and close his eyes at Waterloo.

In the churchyards round about are headstones erected to the memory of gallant young officers who died in exile—at Ashburton "Francois Guidon" sleeps far away from sunny France. But the *entente* has come, and the Channel tunnel is in the future, and then, who knows! Young French heads may come here and be bowed over the green turf. Ah! If Francois Guidon could only know!

Marshal Cambronne was quartered at Ashburton in the house of a man who was a sergeant in the English army, fighting against his beloved France. And yet there was no anger in the souls of the men who fought. The marshal was happy, and when he was free, he gallantly presented his portrait to Mrs. Sergeant Eddy, whose granddaughter still possesses it, and you may see it in her room at the Golden Lion—a good sample of a Devon inn in the coaching days.

There were American prisoners here also, and many many descendants of good Devon families lie in the little cemetery behind the prison. Good Devon earth covers them, and a "memorial" rises above the tall bracken.

The prison is now a National Institution for the restoration of unfortunate men corrupted by society.

Patients wear uniform marked with the "broad arrow," to distinguish them as national property, and every care is taken of them lest they should lose their way in a fog. When anyone is reported "missing" a search is made with as much diligence as though the Koh-i-nor were missing from the Tower.

An old lady living in a lonely part of the moor, once informed the officials that there were "broad arrow" marks around her roost. There they were, sure enough, on the soft ground. A Princetown treasure must have escaped.

Whilst they were talking and examining a flock of geese waddled along.

The counterfeit presentment of the broad arrow was theirs.

Sometimes men wearing the broad arrow are anxious to be lost to official sight. They tire so quickly of studying the beauties of nature from one spot—sometimes they do not care for the study at all, and would rather be in streets, and walk on pavements. Life becomes monotonous to men restless and inventive, and willing to shake hands with society once more, and forgive!

The Chaplain tells a tale of two gentlemen in broad arrow uniform getting clear in a mist, and wandering to a gentleman's house. In the dining-room they discovered the goodly remains of a big supper—ham and turkey, cheese and sweets and wine.

They were grateful, and departed, but only to fall into the arms of prison warders, who restored them to their anxious guardians.

The kindly Chaplain noticed that one of his flock was depressed.

"Is there anything on your soul? Does conscience trouble you, my man?" asked he, kindly.

The man was touched.

"I shall never forgive myself—not having had another slice of that ham!" said he.

Sometimes society is not prepared to accept forgiveness, and gives information when the broad arrow uniform makes its appearance. Even families do not rejoice at untimely visitations and reunions.

One day a native escaped and made a bee line for his wife's cottage. The lady was at home, but not in the mood to forget and forgive, and live happily evermore.

She expected a visit and locked her door.

"I want to come in," said the man.

"Not likely; you don't come in here. The policeman is about the place, and I don't want 'ee," said the woman.

Then the man tramped back to the National Institution and regained admittance. There was one place in the world where he was welcome!

All sorts and conditions of men come here. Not so long ago the "Prison Service Review" printed the "Lay of the Lagged Minstrel," an ambitious effort, concluding—

> "God save the Queen, and may He send down blessings on her head;
> She may make me Poet Laureate when Alfred Austin's dead."

Another poet grumbled at the fare. The air of the moor is so appetising, and the men in such splendid health, that they can eat more than is provided.

The nation provides six ounces of bread and a pint of gruel for breakfast, and the same quantity of bread, with cocoa, for supper, and meat three times a week for dinner—half a pound each man.

Many struggling men condemned to pay income tax would rejoice if their "bread was certain and water sure" every day on so liberal a scale.

Sunsets on the moor are very beautiful. If you tramp about a good deal you are not likely to see many sunrises. A holiday tramper doesn't want to see sunrises—his eyes are too heavy with the weight of dreams to open when the sun gets up. To enjoy sunrise, one must make a night of it. I nearly saw the sun get up, once.

I saw sunsets in all tints—light golds and saffron, reds and purples; and I saw the hills and combes and rocks in all lights and shades, and for the very life of me I can't set down on paper what I saw. I am like the schoolboy who knows the answer quite well, but can't say it. I know the poor boy is sent down, and I must be sent down too.

If you are caught in a "wisht" place in a storm with thunder and lightning, you are likely to remember that also, and get some sort of an idea of what it means on the moors to people who tell you that the hounds of hell are let loose to hunt lost souls across the wastes on certain nights in winter. I would not have missed the sight, because it gave me insight—so I fancy—and enabled me to understand the legends of Wisht hounds, and Gabriel's hounds, and Dinham's dogs, and what suggested them, and how they spread, and why they keep their place in the folk lore of the county among a population not given to fertile invention—not like their cousins across the Tamar.

"Wishtman's Wood" is one of the haunts of spectres—and a "wisht" place it is, wherein the dwarf oaks, all knotted and twisted and gnarled, seem to protest against the gift of life. "Wishtness," the spirit of depression and sadness, "walketh here;" and when the voices of the moor mingle with the voices of the heavens in tempest and darkness, what wonder that peasants tremble in their huts, and transmit fear to their children?

Even a City man, without fear, without nerves, without beliefs, would find a new sensation, if he lived during long winter nights in a hut without electric light or gas, and no better fire than can be made with peat, and fantastic shadows on the walls changing with every blast of wind.

Much land has been brought into cultivation, whereat some rejoice, but some make faces and say they liked it better as it was, and that Nature is most beautiful when most savage.

In a holiday tramp one meets plenty of savagery, and the wonder is that men should have the energy and patience to try even to make waste places blossom as the rose. In places it would seem an almost impossible task to get anything to grow except creeping mosses, and lichens, and short grasses; but granite-strewn land, when broken up, is profitable, because hard, unyielding granite contains rich food for plants, which it gives up generously in rain and dew and moisture. And the moor is the very place to make the granite yield its treasure.

Moor women are a sturdy and independent race, very much given to having their own way, but not afraid of work, either before marriage or after. The "subjection of women" was never very well understood in these parts, for the women were as ready to fight as the men. The women of Dartmouth, the men being at sea, met the French on their landing, and drove them off with great slaughter; and they were the daughters of the women who broke the power of the Danes in Devon.

Before the Conquest there was a long and bitter contest for supremacy between the Danes and Saxons, and sometimes victory favoured one and sometimes the other, and the standard of the Danes was victorious along the Valley of the Dart—from Totnes to Dartmouth.

Cuthbert, the Saxon Earl, was depressed by dreams showing him the raven, bird beloved of Odin, everywhere triumphant. He consulted his chiefs and they gave him no comfort; their men had been so often beaten that they could not be relied on to make a stand.

"ONE OF THE HAUNTS OF THE SPECTRES."

Whilst they were yet talking, a herald came from the Danish camp, summoning the Earl to surrender.

Then the Earl sought Hilda, his wife, who was cunning as a fox, and bold as cunning, and she went and consulted with the women. And this was her counsel.

Give the messenger to eat and to drink and lead him through the camp where the women are, and let him see how fair they be, not like the women of the Danes, and then send him to me.

The Earl did so, and the Danish messenger went through the camp, and saw the women in their ornaments, and admired their beauty, and fine forms, and great strength. Then the Countess Hilda took him in hand, and played upon his vanity, and sent a message and a token to the Danish chief, saying, "On Friday, ere sunset, the Saxon women will be in the Danish camp at Dittisham."

So the Saxon women dressed, and beautified themselves, and marched to Dittisham, and the Danes feasted and caroused, and every chief chose a lady, and every warrior a woman to sit by him in the great hall of feasting.

When the men had well drunk and were boastful, Hilda gave the signal to the women to retire, saying they were modest, and it was their custom to await the coming of their lords in their own tents.

In the morning, as soon as it was light, all the Saxon women assembled around the Countess Hilda, and every woman showed the stain of blood upon her dagger.

Then Hilda blew a blast upon a trumpet, and the Earl and the Saxon host entered the Danish camp, and in every tent a man lay prone, with heart wound gaping wide.

All the Danish standards were taken, and on every standard the magic raven drooped its head and wing, which was a sign from Odin that the power of the Danes was broken in the land. And so it was.

These were the mothers of the men who resisted the Normans, and then spread themselves over the moors, and kept themselves to themselves for centuries. Their descendants are on the moors to-day; and if you bargain with them you will learn their cunning; and if you live amongst them you will learn that a woman looks upon it as a shame to be the mother of a son who will not struggle and wrestle and fight for his own, or who will turn his back upon the foe in the day of battle.

All through the terrible South African War, the mothers of Devon dried their tears when they knew that their sons fell fighting with all their wounds in front!

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE moor has its artists as well as its poets. Devon, in fact, has been a fine nursing mother for artists, and is proud of her children. Excluding Middlesex, Devon has produced more artists of the first rank than any other county, and nearly five to one of the sister county, wherein is inspiration on every rock. Plymouth alone reckons six who have been found worthy of a place in the National Gallery—the great Sir Joshua being one.

The "voice" of the moor was not always heard, or, if heard, it passed unheeded, until it sounded in the heart and soul of Widgery the elder, who went out into the open and painted what he saw and felt, and brought home canvasses glowing with colour and sunshine, radiant and storm swept, which only to look at made one feel the breath of life, and stirrings indefinable. One might almost say that the moor had given birth to a poet who worked with a brush; the same as it had previously done when inspiring Williams to paint its rivers and the decorated fringes of the tablelands. The old Widgery was of bolder genius and may be termed the first-born son of the moor. Of course he has had a large following—his mantle descended on his own son, whose work showed more technique and refinement, but then the moor lost something of its power and weird fascination on canvas. Then there is another son of the moor nursed upon its heather, Morrish of Chagford, who has done little else but wander over bog and morass, and surprise Nature in secret places. He is one of the ancients now, but is to be found at Chagford, as of old.

There are artists everywhere—North and South, East and West. It is a pleasure to meet them working in the open, for they are under no haunting fear that their subjects will be exhausted. Oh no. "The moor is so varied, so lovely and so entertaining in its effects of light and shade, foreground and distance, that any artist worthy of the name can find subjects for a lifetime here," said an artist between his strokes. There is quite a little colony at Plymouth—Mitchell and Brittan, King and Barrett amongst them.

Here is Pycroft's picture representing the true sons of the moor sitting by streams and granite boulders. "You find them sketching

painstakingly, giving the correct form and substance of the 'bit' before them, catching the tints as they fly, and giving to their work an air of reality, and a degree of daylight that is not to be found among the works of men of old time. On our Devonshire painters' canvasses the sunlight now dances upon the broken stream; the moss, lichen and ivy grow on the rock, and you can tell what rock it is; the anatomy of trees is correctly given; the season of the year is depicted, with its delicate greens or its golden russets, the very time of day is seen at a glance."

"Some of the very best work of the county is just now being done by the school of Dartmoor artists," says a gentleman over a cigarette at the comfortable inn at Okehampton. He is not a professional who says this, but one who has a genuine liking for moor pieces painted in the open, and no great fancy for "studio" work. He seems to think he can smell a studio picture, and pours into my ears some observations about "studio" work which would not be too pleasant to the young and lazy to listen to.

A most entertaining companion; you may meet similar almost everywhere, and to find them out you have only to start them on their hobby, and listen. It is wonderful how one can slip through life and make friends by merely listening!

There are a few places one always likes to see because such and such a man was born there. I don't know why, but one expects to see, or hear, or feel something; and when nothing out of the ordinary takes place there is for solace the idea that something might have happened. When at Ashburton one should run over to Holne Rectory, where Charles Kingsley saw the light. We know the sort of man he was—tall and sallow-faced, with a twinkle in his eye and a curl at the corner of his mouth, as though he were shutting his lips close lest a witty thing should slip out unawares. We are free to fancy what sort of long-legged youth it was who played about these gardens, and we may fancy that we meet him wearing an Eton jacket on the road to church, or see him starting off with rod and basket for a good day's fishing in the Dart. Kingsley rarely loved sport, like all good Devon men.

Then from Ashburton or Totnes, it matters little which, one can visit Dean Prior, where Herrick wrote the most beautiful pastoral lyrics in the world. A marvellous man, and lovable with all his faults. It was he who taught his pig to drink ale out of a tankard, and it was he who, on the word of one Dorothy King, once shied his sermon at his congregation and cursed them roundly for going to sleep. If the

old church had never been altered it would be simply lovely to sit here in the cool and fancy the poet working himself up into a temper, until he threw his precious M.S. out of his hand, and then his wig, for wig was pretty sure to follow. And yet, fancy! it was he who wrote that sweet "Litany to the Holy Spirit" which seems to soothe the troubled soul like consecrated oil.

"When I lie within my bed
Sick in heart and sick in head,
And with doubts discomforted,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me."

No one, in his day or since, abused Devon and Devonians like Herrick—he abused the climate, he abused the rivers, for their "rocky beds," he abused the people as "salvages" with rocky hearts, and yet he is forgiven, for over the "maypoles, hock-carts, wassails, wakes;" over the "bridegrooms, brides and bridal cakes;" over the "brooks and birds and flowers;" indeed, over the whole of the homely life of Devon he passed the purple glow of Arcadian romance. And here he lies, in the old parish church, wherein a tablet has been tardily erected. Herrick was not a Devonian but a Londoner, but it was Devon which took possession of him, and the best he had to give he gave to the fair county which adopted him, even against his will, when he grew repentant of the "unbaptised rhymes, writ in my wild, unhallowed times." Good Devon earth is above him now, and has been for two centuries and a half, and we are waking up to know and to love him.

Then there is Ashe House, a mansion in the Valley of the Axe, which has some connection with the present because it was the birth-place of John Churchill, son of Sir Winston Churchill, the great Duke of Marlborough. Winston is an old family name, and there are two Winston Churchills in the world now, neither willing to let the old name die.

What is left of the mansion of Ashe is a farmhouse now, and the chapel in which John Churchill was christened has been turned into an outhouse with a cider press in it.

It is not known whether Lord Macaulay visited these ruins when he was engaged in distilling venom for the illustrious founder of the ducal house of Marlborough. He might have. The Drakes lived here at one time, and this fact might have made his lordship's pulse throb with patriotic pride, although it did not concern his "purpose" to write a History of England commencing anterior to the accession of King James the Second. All that affected "Handsome Jack

"WHERE HERRICK WROTE."

Churchill" of course interested the historian, and it is a relief to every honest Devonian, after a course of Macaulay, to remember that the Churchills are Dorset people, and then to pass him over with all his "blushing honours" to the neighbouring county.

There is a very good story told by Page of Ashe. Lord North (who sent out taxed tea to America and brought trouble to a head) was staying at the house during harvest time in the year 1765. There is a Devonshire custom called "crying the neck" observed at the close of harvest. "Some ears of corn from the last load of corn are bound into a rude shape; this one of the harvesters holds aloft, while the others, raising their hooks, shout 'A neck! a neck! a neck! We have un.' Lord North heard the shouts, and for some reason or other thought that the labourers meant to have *him*. His fears appear to have communicated themselves to a friend, who, drawing, his sword, advanced upon the astonished reapers. Of course, the custom was at once explained, and the sword returned bloodless to its scabbard."

A few ivied walls close to Axminster railway station mark the spot where the stately Newenham Abbey stood, which is interesting from the fact that "by divine mercy Thomas Prince breathed his first air" here, as Prince quaintly says of himself in his "Worthies of Devon," a most entertaining book, containing a little piety, and a good deal of biography seasoned with shrewd and cynical remarks. This little country town, from which trade has departed, and gives one the appearance of having gone to sleep to dream of other days, was also the birthplace of William Buckland, geologist, of "Bridgwater treatise" fame. If one could but whisper into his ear the names of Darwin and Huxley!

The birthplace of Blackmore would be a famous place of pilgrimage were he only born on Devon soil. There is a fine portrait of him, by Harry Hems, in Exeter Cathedral, which was placed there because he was a North Devon man, though "by the accident of events" born in Berkshire. However, Devon was his playground, and when he grew up and had the money, he purchased the land which, in the old familiar phrase, "once belonged to the family." What more could he do to make amends for not having been born in the right place?

The North of Devon counts John Gay as a son, and we may turn aside at Torrington and go to Frithelstock if we would like to visit his native place. But we must visit Westminster Abbey if we would see a memorial to the man who wrote the "Fables" and "The Beggars' Opera"—the happy, cheerful, indolent Gay, in whom the Gallic side was always uppermost.

CHAPTER XXVII.

DEVONSHIRE humour is homely, and if you are in too much of a hurry you may miss it altogether. Some persons who have scampered through the towns and villages speak of the inhabitants as stolid, and stupid, and morose, because they don't make any effort to show their bright side at a moment's notice. "Quick-witted" they are not, but they accommodate their pace to their wit, and are apt to turn matters over and over, and then sleep on them before acting; and when once people make up their minds it is very difficult to induce them to change.

The native tells a story just as he plays skittles—he takes plenty of ground and puts on a twist. It is a slow game—skittles—when played three in a rank, but the twist does fine execution, like a story with a snap to it. Generally the humour lies in the snap, and if you are impatient and lose the snap, why, there's nothing in it, and you abuse the native for being slow, and dull, and stupid, and what not.

Devon folk do not cut you short with something brilliant, like an Irishman, for example, and must have their own way. First of all they make an atmosphere and fill in with details, and then, all unconsciously, something is said which gives a humorous turn to the narrative.

There is a "solid" look about a man when he is telling a story, and when he's most "solid" he's nearest the point he wishes to make, the which, if you miss, you miss everything; and he produces his effects with very slight and simple means. There is, too, an almost entire want of sympathy shown on the part of the narrator, and if there is an element of danger to someone he doesn't let you fancy that it is any concern of his. Told of an evening over a pint of cider, the ordinary events of the day have often their droll and humorous sides.

Giles, for example, tells how he was loading corn on a wagon, when he suddenly realises that he is high up in the world, and doesn't see how to get down without breaking his neck. The ladder is somewhere else and the wagon is on the move. He shouts to the farmer:

"Here I be, sure enough, maister, but how be I to get down?"

"Oh, if thee shuts thee eyes and walks about a bit thee'll cum down vast enough," says the farmer.

And all the sympathy that Giles gets is being called a "tummit-haid" for not seeing how to get down avore he got up.

The native mind works mysteriously towards a desired end. A yeomanry volunteer appears on parade decorated with the medals won by his stock at a local cattle show. The sergeant compliments him sarcastically on his bravery, and asks how he won them? "Through the beef of old Devon," replies the man, with a face of innocence.

In country districts the land steward is the target, especially if he is a "hard man." Some stewards are not hard; and one of the exceptions having died, the tenants subscribed and erected a tablet to his memory, describing him as "A steward *and* a just man."

The tenant of a neighbouring estate read the inscription carefully, and then said, "However did'm get *both* into *one* coffin?"

A steward wanted to raise a tenant's rent, and there was the usual talk. At last the tenant's mind was made up.

"I want do et," said he. "I tell 'ee what 'tis, Mister Steward, ef all thy sins were writ upon thy forehead they would be so big that, dang me! if thee wid be able to pit on thy hat."

A stable boy tells stories about horses, and says he has one in his charge which will be good for months on end in order to give him a kick on the sly.

The clergy come in for their share of attention. A North Devon farmer, and a Churchwarden, said he knew for certain that the clergy attended Episcopal visitations in order to exchange their sermons under the eye of the bishop; and he added slyly, "Our parson got a terrible poor set last year."

A Brixham fishwife is credited with a repartee which would pass muster anywhere. Having sold her fish, the housekeeper gave her a glass of cordial to warm the cockles of her heart. It was an old liqueur glass, and Betty let it slip from her cold fingers.

"What have you done?" cries the housekeeper in much distress. "Master prizes that glass, for it is so very old."

"Who would have thought it," says Betty, "it was so very small for its age."

But a real Devonshire story must be listened to from beginning to end, and not merely robbed in this way of its point, which is sometimes touched with caustic, as in the case of the yokel at Chumleigh, who asked a swaggering sergeant, bent on recruiting, whether, amongst his other great performances, he had "ever been killed."

Here is the real thing.

JAN STEWER'S DIALECT STORY.*

WHO WON THE RACE?

"I bin stiddin (1) an' stiddin, an' thinkin' an' thinkin', an' I've argied it out in me awn mind, an' I've argied it out wi' Bill Sparkes, an' Jim Webber, an' Tammas Haith, till us was black in the faace. An', darn me, the more I stids, an' the more I thinks, the vurder off I gets."

I made a sympathetic remark, mildly interrogative, hoping I might learn the problem with which the old man strove, and probably assist towards a solution.

Apparently he heard me not—possibly, for the moment he had forgotten my existence.

He pursued his audible rumination.

"Cou'se, Jim's right so var's he go'th; *'twas* the 'osses that was raacin' an' nit the men. But, arter that, 'ow c'n zay he winned the raace when he come in last?"

Again I endeavoured gently to stimulate my meditative friend to confidence. I might as well have attempted to stir round the English Channel with a tea-spoon. I had not then learnt that the man who can "pump" a Devonshire man has yet to be born.

However, just as I was beginning to tire of his soliloquy, and had abandoned all hope of ever having a connected history of the facts, and, moreover, had decided to seek more genial company (a decision he probably gathered from my interjectory "Well!" and the little preparatory adjustments of cap, coat, and cuffs, which usually portend departure) he suddenly burst into his tale with the only preliminary—"'Twas like this yer," and became henceforth as garrulous as he had previously been reticent.

* * * * * *

'Twas like this yer. 'Enery Gale 'ad a-got a mos' maazin' vine oss. No oss around vir miles cuden tich en—that's 'cordin' to 'Enery's estimaation. Black oss 'e was, wai' a li'l bit of a white spot p'n he's vorrid.

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*Written for this work by the author of "Tales In a Carrier's Van."

"THE HAUNT OF ROGER ROWLE, THE OUTLAW."

This yer windervul oss was 'bout th' aunly thing 'Enry cude tell (2) about. Whenever 'e got back 'ome vrom market 'twas orwiz he's rules to tell about the divverent osses he'd lef' be'ind p'n the rawd.

"Caw! Bless my zawl," he'd go, "tell about Varmer Burridge's noo oss! Pah! W'y he cuden bide in the zame turnpike rawd wai' mine. He was a gude mile ahaid, and I zes to my oss, 'Diment, my deear,' I zes, 'Zee thiky bay oss on a-haid, my buty? Yu got to ketch vore to he, 'genst us comes to vower-crass rawds.' Laur bless yer 'art! Her jis lied vor her yers (3), my boyes, an' us flipped pas' Varmer Burridge like a bird vlyin."

Us use to get a bit weary o' yerin' so much 'bout 'Enry's oss. Although mind, I ban't gwain to zay but wat he was a licker to travel. I like to gie ev'rybody their just dues.

Owsumever, wan day Baker Loosemore took back 'ome a frash oss which he'd buyed to Bant'n Vair (4); an', b' all accounts, 'twas another none-such, like 'Enry's. 'Twas a black oss too, thees wan, an' very sim'ler to 'Enry's. In vac' yude scarcely knaw'm apart, aunly that Tammas Loosemore's ad'n got uther white spot.

An' then the vun beginned.

Into the bar-parler o' the "Urd Lyon" thik zame aiv'min, the chaps all got turrifyin' (5) 'Enry most jewsive.

"Law, 'Enry," zes Jimmy Barnicott, "wa's think o' Tammas Loosemore's new oss, then?"

"Ant zeed'n," zes 'Enry.

"Naw, begad; an' ban't likely to nuther; vir I be dalled if 'e dawn travel so vas' tis a job vir anybody to zee'n."

"Think he's vaster 'n 'Enry's mare?" zes Georgie Gurnslade.

"Vaster! Ees, fai, I sh'd think 'e *was* vaster. Wy he'd be 'arf-ways to Ostrillia avore 'Enry's mare ad a-got her vore ligs out str'ight."

Aw my blassid! Yu shid a-yerd 'Enry carry on. Wull, there, I'm mortle glad yu did'n, vir a gen'lman like yu wid a-bin shocked.

Owsumever, to cut me tale short, as the sayin' is, the outcome of all o't was, they daycided to ride a raace. My jaly! the aczitement ther' was in thees-yer villidge the day thiky raace was rinned. Revel-day wad'n no-ways to be compeered to 't. Ev'ry blassid zaul in the plaace turned out to zee it—man, wumman an' cheel, an' hunderds cume from the villidges aroun'. Vi' pound a-zide they was raacin' vor, an' Jan Hurvord 'old the staakes.

Cou'se 'twas the young chaps was arrangin' all o't, an' a middlin' bit o' spoort they was maakin' too, yu mid depaind. They mapped out the coorse, an' marked'n out wi' vlags. Dree mile, 'twas. Start out

to Varmer Bullid's moor-geat, (6) up auver he's ten-acres, down-auver the hay-vield, auver the strame, 'crass Varmer Gidley's mead, 'crass the rawd there where th' ole Turnpike-geat used to be, around the Plantaation, up auver Yeffle-moor (7), and vinish in Easter Close, back o' the church.

Cou'se, they choosed thiky way on 'count o' the number o' haidges an' ditches to be got auver. But the wist haidge of all was the wan to get into Easter Close, 'bout o' hunderd yard from the vinishin-p'int. 'Tis a mortle high haidge, sure nuff, an' ther's aunly wan plaace where 'tis possible to crass'n 't all; an' that's where the skule-chillern 'ave med a gap climmin auver to go to skule.

Wull, the day come to-las', an' ev'rybody was there to zee, from Squire down to Joe Mudge, the rawd-scraper. Up tap o' Beacon-Down us cud zee'm comin' the whaul way, seps when they waint aroun' the plantaation.

My days! wat a raace 'twas. Neck an' neck they come, strainin' ev'ry nerve in their bodies.

"They'll nivver last out the paaze," zes the Squire, as aczited as anybody.

But they ded; an' whane they come into zight aroun' the plantaation ther' wad'n a peen to chuse 'tween 'em.

Right vore they come, pankin' (8) an' raddy to drap, but still gwain at a killin' paze. The osses was as aiger as the raiders, an' didn' need a particle o' whip, although they was gettin' a-plainty.

Th' ole Squire was fo'ce to take off he's 'at an' wipe the swattin' off he's ball-haid. "By Gad!" 'e zes, "I nivver witness nort to aiquel theas." An' ev'rybody 'ad 'olleyed therzel's oze.

B' theas time they was both makin' vir the gap in the las' haidge; an' the osses yers was vlappin' down p'n their faaces, an' the tears was rinnin out auver to their ayes; but ther wad'n the distance o' two inches divverence between 'em.

"'Tis jis' which raiches the gap vus'," zes the Squire.

"They'm gwain to raich it both together yer 'onner," I zes, an' I was right too.

Like two birds they rized up to the gap zac'ly the zame instant. But there was barely room vir *wan*, let 'lone *two*. Bevore yu cude zay Jack Robinson they was all to a mix-muddle p'n the ground, so's yu cude 'ardly tell which was man an' which was oss.

Forch'nitly nuther-wan o'm wad'n hurted, but 'Enry was fust out o' the muddle, an' he was up p'n the oss's back in a jiffey. Whip and spur he lat into the poor baste, an' got auver the haidge zum'ow. But

Tammas wad'n but a matter of inches be'ind, an' durin' they las' 'underd yards I thort the vokes wid surely all go maazed. But Tammas cud'n catch vore, an' 'Enry cum'd in vust.

Bless my art, what a scene 'twas. All the chaps wat 'ad bet their money on 'Enry lifted 'en out the zaddle an' was gwain to carr' 'en aroun' p'n their shoulders.

All of a zudden Tammas Haith zes:

"Wy 'Enry, dam'f thee *as'n vinished p'n the wrong oss.*"

Aw, my dear life! If I was to use ev'ry word in the dictionary I cuden discribe wat the vokes was like. They scritched, they olleyed, they baaled till yu'd a-thort they was let out from zum lunatic azylum to air ther' lungs.

Cou'se, when 'Enry come to jump p'n he's oss agean he'd med a mistaake, an' got up p'n Tammas's I

Laaf! I thort I shid a bus' mezel'.

But wat a shanty 'twas to be sure.

'Enry down-argied ev'rybody that he'd winned the raace; an' Tammas he zed how cude that be, when he's oss cum'd in vust?

"An' zo," added the old man complainingly, "there us be, no andier a zettlement than us was avore."

I suggested a second race, as a method of overcoming the difficulty which possibly had not obtruded itself upon their intellects.

He regarded me for several seconds with fittingly scornful eye, but without moving his head. Then, having given me time to wither to suitable proportions, he continued—

"Tha's jis' the wist o't; 'Enry's oss died nex' day, an' two days arterwards, Tammas's oss brock's lig (9) an' 'ad to be shat. Zo us'll nivver knaw vir certin whichy *was* vastees' oss—laistways, not in *thees* world."

(1) Studying.
(2) Talk.
(3) Ears.
(4) Bampton.
(5) Teasing.
(6) Gate.
(7) Heathfield-moor.
(8) Panting.
(9) Broke his leg.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

BIDEFORD made Kingsley, and not Kingsley Bideford. You may have thought differently once upon a time, when reading "Westward Ho!" in London Town, before you knew Bideford or Bideford men. But when you come here you'll know better, and get rid of a false impression, which, after all, is one of the advantages of travel.

A Bideford man at home has a quiet way of taking possession and knocking all the conceit out of one. He does not tell you that the place is the eighth wonder of the world—he does better than that, and leaves you under the impression that it is, and that your education has been somehow neglected at not knowing it. When the old place came into existence is not of much consequence—when the earth was cool enough, the old people probably took possession, and became lords of the Taw, the Torridge and the Sea. If you are an antiquarian you know that you have touched bottom here, and that it is quite hopeless for you to think any more of the Little Minster in which you were born, and of which you have been so proud, "the origin of which is lost in the mists of antiquity," to quote the local authority. A great many "origins" are lost in this way, and a Bideford man smiles serenely when you say so. He is not disturbed. His starting point for old Bideford is when the earth cooled.

When the curtain rises in the historic period, there is a Bideford, sure enough, towering against the broad Torridge in flood, and giving birth to a hardy race, who will call no man "Master" on sea or land, without first fighting for mastery—a good old fighting stock from the beginning. Then come down later, when "the mists of antiquity" are supposed to clear a bit, and the angels of heaven are here advising where and how the marvellous bridge is to be built. There is no mistake about this, for it is on record, and the record is as true as that the soul of the Viking king is imprisoned in the Hubba Stone, which is to be seen to this day. And, later still, come down to the Kingsley era, there is Bideford, self-contained and self-reliant, queen of the seas, wherever ships may sail, mothering men who are to give to England the first real taste of Empire. Talk of Kingsley making

Bideford, indeed! when there was a Bideford so ancient, and heroic, and enterprising when he took up the thread of his story, and established his own fame and reputation and literary right and title to that very big slice of Devon known as "Kingsley's Country."

A Bideford man, when he chooses to talk, throws in these bits of history as mere fragments of something larger and more important still, until Devon looms upon the historic canvas as the first of English counties, and Bideford as the brain and soul of Devon. All the little Minsters, with origins lost in the mists of antiquity, are swallowed up as you listen.

It saves a good deal of trouble, and one can get over the ground so much faster during a summer holiday, to get a big brush sketch of things from a well informed native. Of course one doesn't really expect to see Sir Richard Grenvile and Mr. John Oxenham, or even little Amyas Leigh furtively sharing his chocolate creams with sweet Rose Salterne; and yet one would not be altogether surprised, for here are the narrow streets leading to the Quay, through which Sir Richard, tall and stately and every inch a gentleman of Devon, really did walk. On the old Quay there is a sailorman, with blue and red tattoo marks on his arms, and the post he leans against is the very post against which Salvation Yeo used to lean and spin his sea yarns; and the man you see is just the lean, leathery, storm-washed sort of a man you fancy that Salvation Yeo must have been. The canvas begins to crowd a bit with real forms, and you walk around to Rose Salterne's house—it's there—and hang about until you hear lusty townsmen talking broad Devon through their noses. Somehow, you get in touch with the past, and all is so real that you take out your "Westward Ho!" and as you read the period lives for you.

True it is that there is not much of old Bideford left, and they say that that little is disappearing; but what is left of "the little white town" is precious, as relics of the age when North Devon men could build ships, and sail them, fill them with merchandise, and fight them against all-comers on the high seas, and then return with riches untold, and prizes sailing in their wake to grace their triumph. When one sees a map of old Bideford, one is lost in amazement at the presumption and audacity of the men who sailed the world for gain and adventure in cockle-shell ships, fighting all-comers who said them nay on the high seas, making the little white town rank as the fourth in the Kingdom! Is it really true that we are removed by but a few generations from these men, living in these comfortable houses, who filled Bideford Bay with rich argosies until it became known far and

wide as the "Golden Bay?" On the map the old town covers but little more ground than a modern dry goods store in London!

Kingsley paid homage to Bideford, but the visitor now pays homage to Kingsley. The Bideford man is quite content with the arrangement, for nothing on earth can make him less ancient, or less proud of the old men, or less convinced of his right to rank among the immortals. There is a Kingsley statue here now, life-like, and breathing love for the "little white town" on the banks of the wide Torridge, with its fine backing of cliffs and trees. Then there is the Kingsley room in the Hotel, once the home of merchant princes. The legend runs that a part of "Westward Ho!" was written here, under the splendid ceiling painted by Italian artists. If one only sits here long enough the Kingsley spirit may hover over him and inspire another romance of old Devon. Who knows? A good many people sit in the chair.

Westward Ho! is an *In Memoriam* to Kingsley, and there is something about the suburb characteristic of the book after which it is named—a hardy, healthy, breezy place; a sort of place to grow men in. It is a sweet and wholesome place, with the breath of vigorous life brought in from the sea, which gurgles, or roars and pounds upon the half mile of firm hard shingle, emblematic of the kind of men which Kingsley thought the old Devons were and should be for all time. Dandies in patent leather pumps don't come here; or, if by chance they do, they whisk off again. They are not the Kingsley type of men, and the old beach does'nt want them, as Rudyard Kipling, who knew the beach well in his youth, can tell you.

As yet there is not much of Westward Ho!—just a name, with beach, fishing boats, and capstans, and then a promenade and terraces. But everything about the place is breezy—golf and fishing for all comers until night comes, and then, sleep! The weary who cannot sleep through very weariness come here.

For Kingsley lovers Bideford-with-Appledore is *the* place. It seems a pity that Appledore is so detached; still it isn't far off, by land or by water, and comes within Bideford proper if you only reckon in everything this side of the bay. There is the bridge with its legends of angels—never mind "improvements"—with its four-and-twenty pointed arches, "the very omphalos, cynosure, and soul around which the town as a body has organised itself." Then the river and the quay are here, and all we want is to see Amyas Leigh and Salvation Yeo, John Oxenham and Sir Richard Grenvile, all inspired with one grand mission. If we could but see them, and then

run round to the Mayor's house and pass the time of day with the sweet Rose of Bideford!

To speak aloud here of the making a Channel Tunnel would be enough to bring the dead to life, and empty the tombs of the brave old mariners who, in their patriotism, wished for nothing better than for the shores of England to be washed by the deep blue sea.

> "Keepe then the sea, that is the wall of England,
> And then is England kept by Godde's hand."

These brave old mariners said and believed that England would be great and safe and free only so long as she remained in queenly isolation, and had warm and gallant hearts to man her ships, such as were to be found in Bideford and Appledore, and in every cove and village on the coast, or within sound of the booming sea. The words uttered aloud would be sufficient spell to summon the ghostly forms of the old sons of Devon, all of gentle blood and hard fighters, who in life were wont to keep company with the Sir Richard of imperishable memory. We can see amongst the gathering of shades, indignant and remonstrant and with half-pitying looks for the degeneracy of the times, the Bassetts of Umberleigh, the Fortescues of Wear, the Carys of Clovelly, the Chichesters and Copplestones, the Coffins and St. Legers, the Stucheys and Heards, and not the least famous, John Oxenham and Amyas Leigh. Promoters of the scheme come here and meet these shades of the men who have been face to face with death at midnight in the ancient churchyard.

Imagine the scene. The promoters of the bill with sixteen millions at the bank, and a small army of engineers with plans all drawn and all ready to begin, and counsel learned in the law with bill all drafted, and statesmen all ready to give consent—all these and the rest are here with eyes fixed upon the noble group in armour clad and hand on sword.

Sir Richard speaks, and the manner of the man we know from the monumental brass in the ancient church forming the grey background to our weird picture. This is he who in his little ship, the *Revenge*, kept the whole Spanish fleet at bay for a day and a night, and who, when his ship was riddled with balls and her decks a shambles, with his dying breath called the master gunner to him and counselled him to scuttle the ship. No surrender! But the crew murmuring, the dying hero was carried on board the Spanish Admiral's ship, on whose deck he died, and dying, uttered words which will never grow old and stale, as long as Englishmen possess the grandeur to be great. The words are engraved on the brass tablet in the Church:

"Here die I, Richard Grenvile, with a joyful and quiet mind, for that I have ended my life as a true soldier ought to do, that hath fought for his country, queen, religion, and honour; whereby my soul most joyfully departeth out of this body, and shall always leave behind it an everlasting fame of a valiant and true soldier that hath done his duty as he was bound to do."

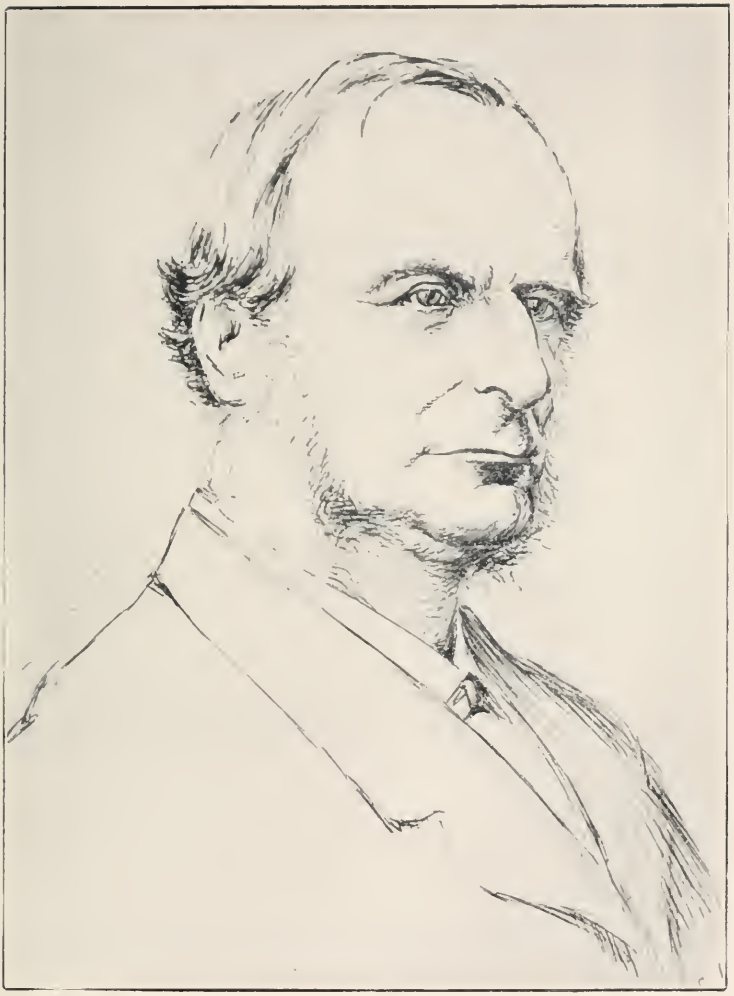
To such a man, and such as he, promoters and engineers, counsel and statesmen urge their arguments in favour of the scheme: no more sea-sickness, quick transit, cheap rates, the *entente*, community of interests, advantages to art, literature and science. The ghostly band, hand on sword, remain unmoved, until the coming of the dawn, when they chant as one:—

"Cherish merchandize, keepe the Admiraltie,
That we be masters of the narrow sea.
The end of battaile is peace sikerly,
And Power causeth Peace finally.
"Keepe then the sea, *about* in special,
Which of England is the town wall;
Keepe then the sea, that is the wall of England,
And then is England kept in Godde's hand."

And chaunting, vanish.

Kingsley's book seems so much more real after walking through narrow Mill Street and High Street, and lounging on the quay, gazing on the river and crossing the bridge, and watching the taut trim little vessels with their white sails passing up and down. It seems a pity that Burrough House should ever have been pulled down. It somehow helps tradition for the actual stones to remain: and old Burrough was doubly blest by tradition as the home of Stephen and William Burrough, the daring explorers in high latitudes, who gave their name to the place, and of Amyas Leigh, the dearly beloved of every boy with the virtue of English manhood within him. Still the house was there when Kingsley wrote, and some of the stones of the old house are in the new, so this tradition need not fade.

Bideford "witches" to-day are a comely race, and move with the times in the matter of fashions and the studying of shop windows, of which there are plenty; and it is boasted that there is no town of its size anywhere wherein such splendid stocks of rich varieties may be found as here. The "witches" of to-day throw their spells over men as the daughters of Eve have done from the beginning, and there is no escape from their arts, as one may find out for himself if



"WESTWARD HO!"

he has but an eye for beauty, dark or fair, with eyes to match. There is nothing to be said against their smiling coquetries, and when they are caught weaving spell and incantation victims only receive the congratulations of their friends, who crowd around the hymeneal altar and witness the sacrifice in due season.

But there was a time when Bideford had its witches of another sort—black and white witches. Kingsley tells the story of Rose Salterne's dealings with Lucy Passmore, the White Witch of Marsland Mouth; but there is another story preserved in the town records, which fills one with pity and sets one wondering that such things could have been in this place, where men never seem to have known fear. It is, however, on record that the last witches—Black Witches—executed in Devon were Bideford women. The story runs that there were three old and most miserable women who confessed, and gloried in the fact, that they had had during their lives most intimate dealings with the Evil One, so that they were able to cast spells over man and beast, on sea and land, and over the fowls of the air. The marvel is not that these poor women should glory in a sense of power, but that the brave and sensible men of Bideford should have actually believed them, as they did, committing them to prison, and sending them to Exeter for trial, where they were found guilty and hung forthwith, but without the all-powerful Evil One lifting a little finger on their behalf. This was in the year 1602, and the names of the poor unfortunate women were Temperance Lloyd, Mary Trembles, and Susannah Edwards. The charge against them was that of "overlooking" two dairy cows, causing them to give blood instead of milk to the "great astonishment of the milkers." Had it only been water probably no notice would have been taken by the dairyman, who was probably no more virtuous than dairymen are reputed to be in the present day, and escape scot free unless there is too much water to too little milk. But the temper of the times was different, and the whole story is preserved in a volume, which may be seen in the Public Library.

The place of the old pillory knows it no more, and the old instrument of torture disappeared years ago; the more the pity on account of the little comedy in which it played a leading part. Now it should be known to all men, that the old men of North Devon were generally in grim earnest in all they did—in buying and selling, fighting on sea or land, they were always in earnest, and a Bideford man liked to be thought thorough. It so happened that Bideford gave birth to one John Shebbeare, who had the pen of a ready writer, and gave up the practice of physic in order to distinguish himself as a political

pamphleteer. Being a Bideford man, of course, the learned Dr. was "thorough," so he found his way into Newgate prison, the great nursery and forcing house of genius. Lord Bute released John Shebbeare, and set him to work to abuse the Government of the day, which he did with such hearty goodwill that he was laid by the heels again and punished, a part of his punishment being to stand in the pillory in his native Bideford, to be jeered at by all men, and women too if so minded.

Then this little comedy of the pillory was played, the sheriff winking the other eye during the performance. The sentence was that the Doctor should stand *in* the pillory; but he was permitted to stand *by* it, attended by his servant in livery holding a huge coloured umbrella over his learned head, to keep off the sun. Was ever the majesty of the law so flouted? Dr. John Shebbeare became a hero, and this comedy played in the light of day in old Bideford spread his name far and wide and immortalised his "Letters to the People of England," which had given such mighty offence to the Government of the day. The sheriff laughed consumedly with the rest, and was duly rapped over the knuckles; but he had his laugh, and so also had the men of Devon, and the good pillory which, for once, was the scene of genuine mirth should have been preserved for all time.

The old people dearly loved a joke. Whoever would think of stumbling on this in the parish churchyard.

"Here lies the body of Mary Sexton,
Who pleased many a man, but never vexed one—
Not like the woman who lies under the next stone.

CHAPTER XXIX.

OLD Bideford was strong in action but not in poetry. These men of Devon could do thrilling acts and face death without flinching, but never sung of them. They lived epics but never wrote them. There was apparently not much use for poets, and when one happened to be born he was turned into a rural postman, and set to walk thirteen miles a day for thirteen shillings per week. His name was Capern—Edward Capern—a child of song, who sang because he could not help it. He is dead now, but left behind him very sweet lyrics and pastorals. Capern is usually spoken of as

THE BIDEFORD POET.

My father met him once, and left the following note in his diary, now published for the first time.

"Capern is about sixty-eight years of age. He wears glasses. His hair (what is left) is almost white. He wears his whiskers and beard long, and has the habit of passing his fingers through his hair, and then his hand over his beard—smoothing it. He is stoutly and well made; good chest, and stands as erect as a youth. Fair complexion, blue expressive eyes, and full of vitality. He speaks rapidly.

"He told me that he had a large acquaintance with modern poets, and possessed letters from Tennyson. He knew Elihu Burritt intimately, and was full of anecdotes about him. First of all he met the scholarly blacksmith at Birmingham who pronounced his name El'hu, not Elihu, and was fond of everything appertaining to old England and old English customs.

"He was inquisitive about the ancient custom of putting people in the stocks by way of punishment. One day he said he should dearly like to see a pair of old stocks. Capern said he knew where there was a pair in the porch of a village church, and took him there. Burritt was delighted—passed his hand over them, and over the rusting ironwork.

"When opened, Elihu would get into them, just to feel what the sensation was like. He tucked up his trousers, and when he was seated and properly caught by the ankles, Capern fastened the stocks, just as they should be. The American—the 'free and independent' did not altogether like the sensation. He seemed a bit nervous, and then, said Capern, with a merry twinkle in his blue eye, and with a broad Devon accent!

"'An' then I laughed at mun an' jeered at mun, rebuking him for his bad conduct an' nearly drave mun mad. I mad b'lieve it was his own bad conduct which brought him there, and praiched to mun to reform his evil ways.'

"Capern laughed at the recollection so heartily that tears came into his eyes.

"He said there was an understanding between them that the survivor should write an appreciation of the other. Burritt was the first to go, and his Devon friend wrote an article, and sent it to the American papers. He said Burritt was a sympathetic and kindly man, whose one great desire was to improve the condition of his

fellow men everywhere. He was a true lover of his species; but he never married, having once been jilted by his sweetheart!

"Burritt was one of the most unsophisticated of men. 'I was,' said Capern, 'a rural postman, and Burritt came to see me one day, when nothing would satisfy him but he must take around and deliver some of the letters himself to the villagers. And what do you think he did? He talked to some of them about Edward Capern, the poet, the great genius, living in their midst!

"'He quite startled some of them,' said Capern, laughingly, 'for they seemed quite ignorant of the fact that any such man lived near them—they only knew of the Capern who delivered letters!' Burritt said to him afterwards, 'What is fame?'

"Capern was very fond of children, and told me anecdotes about his taking them into the fields and showing them flowers, and then making verses for them about the flowers."

Drop down the river and you come to Appledore, which everyone must see if only as a rare old bit of Devon, smelling of fish and tar and boiling cutch, and where one may listen to the ring of the caulking iron. This little old-time place wants to be left alone as a sort of ancient monument; but every Kingsley lover is constrained to come here, and no one goes away without knowing more of the inwardness of "Westward Ho!"

There is a new Appledore springing up now on the East side, with trim houses and villas and gardens, and sidewalks where ladies go about well gloved and booted and the sweetest things in hats and chiffons; and where the men one sees are not above the little vanities of collars and cuffs and turned-up pants. A pleasant place to sojourn in is a white villa on the hillside, when the sun is hot in summer, and cool breezes blow in from the sea or across the river quivering with golden sun-motes. But this is not Kingsley's Appledore.

The Appledore is to the West, where you must go, and wherein you may lounge and sketch and listen to the sea yarns of the ancient Vikings. Very little changes here save the weather and the tides. Step back a thousand years and there is this Appledore with narrow alleys, and stuffy courts, and low cabins, and cellars for storing nets and sails, and all boat gear, and roads all cobbled like Northam pebble ridge. Nothing really can have changed during the centuries, for as the structures crumbled away so they have been renewed on the old foundations. Looked at for the first time this place seems to have been born old, and never to have put on anything fresh but paint and coloured limewash. We seem to have come upon a bit of a vanished

"IN THE ZONE OF STORMS."

world wherein things tumble into decay but otherwise change not—no change but in the seasons, the weather, and the tides which fret away the piles along the river side. And the people change but their clothes, for one generation goeth and another cometh without changing much the type and habits of the inhabitants, who have kept themselves so much to themselves. The men look leisurely over the water, and scan the clouds as of old, and utter the same old prophecies when they hear the moaning of the bar. The women gossip in their doorways, and run about, and shout with all the ancient freedom to their men in the boats, or to the children, sun burnt and wind tanned, playing with the water rats in the ancient gutters. There is the old familiar ring of tools in the shipwrights' yards, for this is the corner wherein the men of old built ships which "rode like ducks" on broad Atlantic rollers and feared no enemy but rocks and old age.

This is the spot we must come to with "Westward Ho!" in pocket, for this is the soul of the Kingsley country. The curtain rises upon the century here, and we can people the river front with the sturdy men of Devon watching the gallant ships go by with their rich freights and prizes, and the women stirring up their men to run into Bideford and bring back the news, and something in the shape of gift or plunder, peradventure it can be got from friend or foe.

In the peaceful old churchyard near by lies all that is mortal of Salvation Yeo, and we are free to fancy that we see the grim old Puritan in the narrow ways, and on the quay, stirring up the hearts of the crowd with bitter enmity against the foes of England, urging them to do the Lord's work faithfully, and to smite the Amelikites, root and branch, wherever found in Spanish ships and in Spanish lands. Old hip-and-thigh Salvation! And they say the breed has not died out, and that the spirit of hot jealousy for the honour and greatness and supremacy of old England slumbers here still, but will surely awaken when the trumpet is blown, and the tap of Drake's old drum is heard. No "Little Englanders" here!

Imagination goes a long way, and serves a most useful purpose when we endeavour to get at the heart of things in these out-of-the-way places, with crooked alleys and narrow cobbled lanes, in which the seagulls dispute with children for possession. The low houses with narrow windows have about them the look of struggle and endurance, and somehow give one an idea of the history of the people earning their living on a rock-bound coast and in the face of tempests. It is no good turning on the dry light of what ought to be here; but only let many-coloured fancy have its play, and we see in old Appledore the

ancient nursery of Bluewater men, the like of which will never be seen again, now that tall masts and white sails have given way to squat funnels and black wreaths of curling smoke. It is a nursery still, and Appledore boatmen are without fear, as you may know when you see them crossing the bay in their frail craft and the shadow of death pursuing. This is a picture to make the heart of a landsman quail: two men in an open boat—one, with hand on tiller, with eyes watching the clouds and dark canvas sail, and the other, bent double, shifting the heavy ballast to windward, or "baling out death with a pipkin" at every chance. When they come to land they make nothing of it. It was a little "coarse" or "dirty" outside, sure enough; but it has happened to them a thousand times, and will happen again, and, after all, a man's as near God on sea as on land.

There are scenes in "Westward Ho!" which should be read here, above the Hubbastone, if you will, on a summer day, when there is breeze enough to blow off the sea haze, and there is visible a fine stretch of the grand Atlantic, with Lundy lying low in a rich and royal blue, as deep as passion and as bright as joy. And here comes sailing as we read a ship with sails all set, just as on the day when Amyas Leigh came home again to his mother. You read:—

"A large ship, nearly a thousand tons, she might be; but not of English rig. The strange sail passed out of sight behind the hill of Appledore; and then there rose in the quiet evening air a cheer as from a hundred throats. Mrs. Leigh stood still and listened. Another gun thundered among the hills, and then another cheer. . . . . Round the Hubbastone she came at last. There was music on board, drums and fifes, shawms and trumpets, which wakened ringing echoes from every knoll of wood and slab of slate. As she opened full on Burrough House, another cheer burst from her crew, and rolled up to the hills, from off the silver waters, full a mile away. Mrs. Leigh walked quickly toward the house and called her maid—'Grace, bring me my hood. Master Amyas has come home.'"

Old Burrough House is real whatever romance may be in the story, and we can sail up the river until the house, which stands on the old foundations, opens up, just as in the days of Amyas. Little really has changed in the centuries, and so you may read and fancy you see and hear and are taking part in the whole affair.

Kingsley, they say, loved this rank-smelling old Appledore; and here it was that he caught the "moan" of the bar, which so fills souls with dread, and then with sympathy for all who sail upon the sea at times when this deep tranquil blue thunders onward in majestic rolls.

Here, beneath us, is the magic Hubbastone, conjuring up visions of strife and slaughter in the days when Alfred ruled, and the men of Devon in one mad tumultuous rush overthrew Hubba, the gallant Viking chief, and his Danish host. And here he lies, within this stone, armlets and crown, escaping on nights of tempest and riding upon the wings of the wind at the head of the old sea rovers. You can see and hear it all, if you will but give your fancy play, for there is witchery in the place.

And only across the water is Instow quay and sands, another little bit of old Devon about which the story moves. To-day these sands are the playground of joyous children employed in cockle-hunting, until tired out with sport; but the little ones return all aglow with delicious health and fall asleep only to dream beautiful dreams of sea-maidens under the sea, all sparkling with gems, and singing sweet melodies to the ceaseless rhythm of the tides.

Our friends, the fishermen, during all the ages, seem never to have given birth to a poet able to sing of the skies and the winds and the sea, and the witcheries of their calling on dark nights on phosphorescent seas, and in the soft twilight of the dawn, when the fish rise and play around them. If there have been fisher poets in the West then they have passed away and left no song of their calling. Here, close by, is the little village of Buckland Brewer, where Edward Capern lived and wrote most of his lyrics—but they were of the land and breathed of life other than that of the sea. And here, too, is Orleigh Court, the birth place of Captain Spekes, the famous explorer of the sources of the Nile, of whom every Devon man is proud.

The "beauties of Bideford Bay" have been said and sung in almost every key of praise, and praise is not monotonous here because the "beauties" vary so much with the state of the tide, the colour of the skies, and the wind and the sea. There are certain nooks and angles and points of vantage in the cliffs between Bideford and Clovelly from whence the beauties seem yet more beautiful. Much depends, of course, on what one wants to see, and how much one can put into the picture for oneself. The Hoop's Inn, near Buck's Mill, is a capital spot to ramble from. Lundy Island and the Welsh hills beyond, weird black cliffs capped with green meadows, wild flowers in crimson and gold, running seaward, down to bare and jagged rocks, with sea birds flying and resting and diving, are always somewhere in the picture. "To landward, all richness, softness, and peace; to seaward, a waste of howling wilderness of rock and roller, barren to the fishermen and hopeless to the shipwrecked mariner." This familiar sketch

is true sometimes, but only sometimes; and the truth is, that on this coast the same picture is seldom seen twice during a holiday visit. All that can be safely promised is that if you are in sympathy with Nature's mood you will see something beautiful and alluring, or wild and tragic, but always something worthy of remembrance.

Clovelly can be reached from Appledore. Clovelly is redolent of Kingsley and herrings. Everyone says there is nothing in the world like Clovelly, except itself; and every Clovelly man says there is no herring on the coast like Clovelly herring. Both, no doubt, are true, only the dainty herring must come first, because the place owes its existence to the herring fishery. Fishermen found that the fish grew round and fat and well flavoured when feeding off this cove long before other *clupea* swimming about the Channel were able to "fry in their own fat." So one fisherman, and then another, and then another, built rough shelters for their boats and gear, and then cottages to live in—commencing as near the water as possible, and then going upwards and upwards and upwards by the steep hill-side, well shaded with trees. So Clovelly grew with so little art that all artists are in love with it; and all the poets are in love with it, because as you look upwards there is so much of detachment from all that is of the earth earthy that the soul lifts itself. This is one of those places which you think can only exist in an Eastern poem, for what hard-headed Saxon would ever dream of building cottages in a wood hung between sea and sky, and then smothering them with roses, fuschias, honey-suckle, jessamin, and the daintiest shrubs that bloom in the open air?

Yes, Clovelly is a poem; and that is possibly why Kingsley, who wrote brilliant word pictures of most other places, gave up the attempt to describe Clovelly in despair.

"No, no," said he, laying down his pen, "the charms of Clovelly surpass all descriptive powers, whether of pen or pencil."

Most visitors when they come here try their hand where Kingsley failed. They begin very well when writing home, and then suddenly stop and finish off abruptly, saying: "Now, my dear, I'll tell you all about it on my return; such a shame to stay indoors when the sun is shining," &c., &c. Mr. Norway tried his hand in his charming book, and you can read it for yourself. "One is the richer in experience for having seen Clovelly," he says, and I think that's the end of the matter.

Kingsley's father was rector here, and here "The Three Fishers" is said to have been written. The "harbour bar" is at Northam.

Long may the family at Clovelly Court have heirs in succession who will let no man "improve" the village.

The people of Clovelly have their troubles as well as the rest of the world, and are kept in a perpetual state of unrest by the pack donkeys who climb the Jacob's ladder called a street. Everything is carried in panniers by donkeys, who enjoy poking their innocent heads through doorways in search of carrots, and nibbling the choicest shrubs within their reach in the trim gardens. Clovelly donkeys are past praying for. They are punished early in life, and all through life, and will not reform. So this place, wherein poor strangers think they catch glimpses of heaven above, is sometimes a place of wailing and hard words and harder blows, and hardened donkeys which will not reform!

CHAPTER XXX.

NORTH Devon differs from the South in many things. The people at first sight seem to be the older and more primitive branch of the same family. The county is full of strange contrasts—every town its own atmosphere, and every district its distinctive characteristics.

The commercial heart of the North is said to be Barnstaple, and the Barumites are notably hard on a deal. They say that the man who can "best" a Barumite ought to make a fortune elsewhere. There is a three days' fair here in September—the first is for cattle, the second for horses, and the third for pleasure. They say that Old Nick at one time attended the fair, but was "bested" in a horse deal, and then, out of pure spite, cursed the blackberries, which are reputed unfit for food after the fair. The Mayor and Corporation treat themselves to "toast and ale" before opening the fair, and a stuffed glove is exhibited in front of the Guildhall as a sign of friendship. In olden times no one was arrested as long as the glove was visible, which must have been a great inducement to "honest" dealers to stay the whole time.

Tom Faggus, the "Dick Turpin" of Devon, hailed from Southmolton, near by. Faggus possessed a "strawberry" mare which, according to all accounts, was a little more than human in intelligence, and a little more than Devonian in fighting qualities. Barnstaple Bridge spans the Taw, and on one occasion Faggus leapt his horse into the river when the narrow way was blocked by officers

in pursuit. On another occasion the "strawberry" mare charged the mob holding her master prisoner, and so fought with teeth and heels that they ran away. Tom Faggus was very good to the poor, who had nothing to lose. The rich he relieved of their "sorrows," and distributed the contents of their purses freely. The poor fellow was caught at last and hung at Taunton, for no rope spun in Devon would do the office. Blackmore hadn't even the heart to hang him on paper!

No statue has been erected to Tom Faggus sitting on his strawberry mare; and yet there are excellent sites waiting to be filled, and excellent artists waiting for the commission to fill them.

There is a French strain in Barnstaple. You talk to Mr. Bird, a man of quick glance and hazel eye, and quick, nervous movement of lips and fingers. His forefathers were named Oiseau, and were wrecked here on their way to Bristol, about the time of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Then there are the Rocks, who were Delaroches, and there is a Rock Park, and an Athenaeum now due to the generosity of this family of old time immigrants.

At Bucks Mills, a fishing hamlet near Clovelly, there is Spanish blood, originally washed ashore with other wreck from the Armada; and the villagers, with the pride of race, keep themselves still very much to themselves. At Beer, near Sidmouth, the people are descended from the Flemings, and so, North and South, days may be spent in disentangling a very pretty race problem.

Capturing a bride with ropes of flowers, and holding her captive until redeemed by the bridegroom's largess, is one of the ancient customs in the North which is too pretty to be allowed to die out. In the good old days a marriage in a country district was celebrated with dancing and feasting and something for everybody, but now it is a scamper, and the bride is hurried into her travelling dress and packed off, by motor, or express, or balloon; then a walk round for the guests, with sandwiches and sherry, and all's over. Some of the farmers are still old-fashioned enough to make a day of it, with night to follow; and the poor do the best they can, so song and fiddle are not altogether banished.

A young man wanting a wife may go to the "Giglet fair" and choose for himself. It is one of the privileges of the fair, and was pretty freely exercised in days gone by, after the young men and women had hired themselves out to service, until the next Christmas or Lady day, as the case might be. A marriageable girl who returned from the fair without being "asked" went down in value, whilst the girl who had many offers went up, and she did not forget in after days

"A POEM."

to remind her John that she was sought after by five men, all better than he, and if she hadn't been the "girt vule she was" she might now be riding in a cart to market, instead of wearing her fingers to the bone, with nothing for dinner but boiled turnips and rusty bacon.

Courting nights is a rural custom.

"Where be going with the lantern, John?" asks a farmer of a young labourer hurrying down the lane.

"Going courting, maister."

"What do 'ee want a lantern vur?"

"To zee what I be doin', maister."

"Tut, man, I never took a lantern whan I went a-courtin'."

"That is what I thought, maister, when I fust zeed the missis," says John, walking off.

The little fishing villages nestling under the cliffs along the coast are just now palpitating with the quiverings of a new life. All the way from Lynton to Bude are old world hamlets and villages wherein families have lived from generation to generation within roar of the sea—fishing a little, gardening a little—beyond that greater roar which the world makes in towns and cities.

You come upon these villages by surprise. You are walking along the cliffs covered with heather, three or four hundred feet above the sea, and follow a narrow zig-zag path until you reach the beach and these little white nests under the shadow of the cliffs, surrounded by gardens in exquisite bloom.

To come abruptly upon one of these hamlets is to experience the sensation of trespassing upon virgin ground. No hotel, no boarding-house in sight, and you must walk up the garden path and ask humbly where you are, and whether—yes, indeed, whether you may look around; and whether the coin of the realm will be acceptable in exchange for hospitality. I think one always feels humble in a strange place which looks as though it ought to be marked "private." And these little hamlets are so coy, nestling against the cliffs, and everything so domestic—net menders on the beach, young women hanging their clothes upon the hedges, old women in the gardens, or sitting in the porches, book on knee, sucking in the sunshine, and taking their last looks upon all this loveliness.

And the men are at the nearest low wall, staring seaward; or leaning over an old boat, bottom upwards. They never tire of the sea, these men, but turn to it day and night, and at all times, as though there were something mystic in the liquid blue, calling to something mystic in their blood.

This is a terrible coast, and comes within the zone of storms which sometimes sweep the Channel with desolation. It was always so, and in the old days the inhabitants lived and fattened on disaster, and went out of their way to entice unwary ships upon a lee coast. Every cove and beach and rock has its tragedy, and the sea-slain lie in the "Strangers' Spots" which are set apart in the wind-swept parish churchyards.

If one would know what happens on the coast make friends with the old men at sunny corners, and of the costguardsmen at the stations. Everything is so real when they speak: there is the tempest and the storm-driven ship, and here are the breakers and the rocks with teeth sharp-set in the jaws of death. In days gone by men offered up prayers to heaven to send some gallant ship upon these rocks; but now the men who tell these tales endeavour to make atonement for their ancestors, and never a year passes but they place themselves in deadly peril to rescue the shipwrecked.

One feels proud to be amongst these men, and to touch them, when one hears of the forlorn hopes that they have led, rescuing man and boy, woman and infant, from the very grip of death; and that some of their kith and kin—sons, brothers and fathers—perished in the unequal struggle. Yes, yes, if there is truth in the stories of wrecking and plunder, there is truth also in the sublime acts of atonement which these men have done.

Tempests pass over these cottages, for their builders knew the secret of cheating the wind. In all creation none can beat a blue-water man for finding a sunny corner. Turn on your heel, and you will know that a new era has commenced, for there is the new house with trim lawn and flagstaff, and "Apartments" writ large; and there is another house uprising close by, hidden by trees, but you hear the ring of the mason's tools. Those who love these places, and have kept their existence secret from their friends, are lamenting now that all these old-world villages have been discovered, and that the new invasion has commenced.

The world wants these places now.

Ilfracombe was the first town of size upon the rock-bound coast to feel the new life which the railway companies were pouring every season into the land, and then to adapt itself to modern requirements. Very little of the old town remains.

Seen from the sea, Ilfracombe rises grandly from the water's edge.

Then there are Lynton and Lynmouth, twin sisters in beauty, to whom Southey gallantly kissed his hand. "My walk to Ilfracombe

led me through Lynmouth, the finest spot, except Cintra and the Arrabida which I have ever seen." This was written many years ago, but the beauty spots were neglected and remained as "unappropriated blessings" until Capital came, and wooed, and set up establishments, and little toy railways to climb the hills.

The cliffs are so high that Lundy Island may be seen from most places—and when seen suffused in a brilliant sunset glow, it is as a floating island of burnished glory.

The owner of Lundy is an Uncrowned King in the Bristol Channel; and called after its owner it is the "Kingdom of Heaven." A queer history has this old island home of pirates and wreckers which has been put up to auction more than once. The last time it was bought in.

In the fairway of commerce, and only eleven miles from Hartland Point, the British Government does not want Lundy, which is a death trap for ships and reputations.

H.M.S. *Montagu* went ashore on the Shutter, and "all the King's horses and all the King's men" couldn't raise her again. The Admiralty would be glad if the sea would open wide its mouth and swallow up Lundy. For poor mariners it is a terror.

It might be made a haven of safety for one quarter the cost of a first-class battleship!

Ecclesiastically, Lundy is a bit of Devon. The ancient Keep of a Norman Baron, the Palace of the Uncrowned King, and a sweet little church are all the buildings of importance on an island three and a half miles long. There are few inhabitants. Rabbits thrive, and it is a paradise for wild birds.

People speak of this part of the county now as "thriving"—the "thriving north" they say. The valleys are fertile as well as beautiful, and life in a farmhouse is the best of all lives, where sport abounds, and junket and cream comes on the table every day.

All along the coast the inhabitants are waking up! They have learnt, somehow, that the world has found out the value of pure air and pure water in sickness and in health, and will come for them in a county where the attractions of life in field and moor, by stream and on sea, are so abounding.

Devon and Cornwall meet near Hartland, but the old Duchy is one and indivisible here—the same sea gently lapping on the rocks below, when all is bright and tranquil; only all around tells of storm and tempest, and bitter struggle. We are close to Morwinstow, a bit of bleak and barren moorland, and a splendid old church, for aye and ever to be associated with the name of Hawker, the man who pitied.

If so minded, we may find our way into the Valley of the Tamar, the upper reaches of which furnished Turner with the subject of his superb picture "Crossing the Brook," and the lower reaches (with Morwell Rocks, Mount Ararat, Pentille and Cotele) second to none for loveliness in the West.

* * * * * *

"AU REVOIR."

How quickly time flies when one is on a holiday ramble! It is September now, the lovely month of September, and there is so much still to see and do and hear.

The Tempter comes—yes, even on the platform at North Road. He comes and whispers——

"Take your seat, sir, *if* you are going on," says the Guard.

Dear, dear Tempter; but I will come again!

Au revoir only.

THE END.

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